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THE

John. McLean.

METROPOLITAN MAGAZINE.

JANUARY TO JUNE, 1841.

AMERICAN EDITION.

VOL. XI.

NEW YORK:

PUBLISHED BY JEMIMA M. MASON,

(LATE LEWER.)

CORNER OF BROADWAY AND FINE STREET.

1841.

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THE METROPOLITAN.

No. CXVII.

JANUARY, 1841.

THE BLUE BELLES OF ENGLAND.

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER I.

SOME PASSAGES IN THE LIFE OF A YOUNG MAN.

'And now, my dear Miss Ridley, permit me to wish you joy,' said Captain Somers, nautically splicing two pieces of red tape together, and then passing the long string so constructed, round, and round, and round a huge bundle of papers, which papers none could mistake for anything, save what they were, namely, a vast accumulation of accounts. 'There, Mr. Weston,' resumed the same gentleman, addressing a somewhat younger man than himself, and patting the large packet thus secured with an air of very considerable satisfaction—'there, sir, that is an exceedingly good day's work. I would rather look over a log-book comprehending an equal number of years, I promise you. And now, my dear, you must give us a kiss a-piece, mustn't you? That's the way, I have a notion, that all these sort of affairs are brought to a conclusion. That is, when everything goes off well, you know, and altogether to the young lady's satisfaction: and I think we seem to have managed matters pretty well between us. Your gallant father left you twenty thousand pounds just eighteen years ago, poor dear little girl! and here we have proved to you, and no false colours hoisted, that you are now, at twenty-one, mistress of thirty. And we have never had any quarrels, have we?'

'I must have been a worse spoilt child than I am, dearest Captain Somers, if we had,' replied the pretty black-eyed brunette he addressed; 'for I believe no girl ever had a more indulgent guardian; and I am very, very much obliged to you—very much obliged to you both.'

'And the kiss, Miss Constance?' said the old gentleman.

In answer to which appeal, Constance shook back her dark ringlets, and held up her pretty face to be kissed. This ceremony was promptly and heartily performed by the gay-hearted and affectionate old man; and the young lady then rose from her place at the little old-fashioned round table, at which she had sat with exemplary patience for three hours and three-quarters, during which the accounts of her long minority had been laid before her.

'Now then we may go back to grandmamma, and have some luncheon,' she said. 'I am sure you must both of you be more tired than I am, if possible.'

Miss Ridley moved towards the door as she spoke, and had nearly reached it when her progress was intercepted by the intervention of the tall and stately person of Mr. Weston, who, with his left hand sheltered within the breast of his waistcoat, and his right gracefully extended in the favourite portrait attitude of some forty years ago, thus addressed her:—

'Though I cannot, charming Miss Ridley, so falsify dates as to demand an equality of privilege with my late respected *confrère*, on the plea of equality of age, yet, as I trust that *rien* in the course of the trust, which I have had the honour to *rempler*, has given you dissatisfaction, I cannot but *me flatter* that you will accord *à moi* also the same *récompense*'

Miss Ridley looked at him with an ex-

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pression which might have puzzled a stranger to interpret. She looked delighted, but yet she retreated for a step or two; not, however, as having any wish or intention of refusing the favour demanded, but apparently only for the pleasure of prolonging the preliminary ceremonies necessary to be passed through before it was obtained. She placed her hands before her, looked upon the ground, and curtsied. Captain Somers passed his large brown hand from the top of his forehead to the tip of his chin, and then turned away towards a window. Meanwhile Mr. Weston approached Constance with the air and step of a young amoureux of the haute comédie at the Théâtre Français, in the year 1816, at which epoch Mr. Weston had made the memorable excursion to Paris which had stamped his character for life as a man of taste, gallantry, high breeding, and most fascinating address.

He took the tips of the young lady's fingers between his own, bowed upon them, kissed them; and then, raising his eyes and disengaged hand to heaven, as if invoking a blessing on the mystic rite, he lightly touched one cheek, and then the other with his lips; after which he gave himself a sharp slap on the forehead with his hand, performed a deep sigh, and fell gracefully back, so as to leave the lady at liberty to pass on.

This she did with a step as measured and deliberate as that with which Mr. Weston had approached her; but, on reaching the door, turned round, and giving an appealing look from the lock to the face of her graceful *ci-devant* guardian, he slid forward towards it with a movement that could hardly have been more *glissant* had the floor been of ice, and throwing the door as widely open as its hinges would permit, bowed within twenty-four inches of the ground as the young lady passed out.

The minute or two required to get Captain Somers away from the window where he had stationed himself, in order to give him the precedence in quitting the room, which, as a post-captain in the navy, the well-instructed Mr. Weston insisted upon yielding to him, afforded time for Constance to bound along into the drawing-room, and to throw her arms round a nice-looking old lady seated at a work-table, pleasantly placed in an old-fashioned bay-window, which looked out upon a beautiful lawn.

'That tiresome business is over, grandmamma,' she said, giving her a joyous kiss. 'Captain Somers is really the very dearest old man in the world, and Mr. Weston the most——'

But ere the epithet intended for this gallant and Gallic gentleman was pronounced, he was in the room.

'Well, dear madam, we have brought our long business to an end at last,' said Captain Somers, approaching the work-table. 'But though we sailed before the wind as fast as we could venture to go, I am afraid we have tried the patience of Miss Constance. However, I must say that, upon the whole, she behaved herself as a young lady ought to do, who is conscious of having arrived at years of discretion. And, moreover, she has promised that you would give us some luncheon.'

'And so I will, captain,' returned the old lady, shaking him very cordially by the hand, 'and *you* must promise to let us see you as often, in future, as you have done in time past, or this coming of age will be anything rather than a joyful event to us. Ring the bell, Constance, and let them know that we are ready for luncheon. Good morning, Mr. Weston, I hope I see you well, sir. Pray sit down.' And then suddenly appearing to forget that any such person as Mr. Weston existed, the old lady began to chat away at a great rate to Captain Somers, asking a multitude of gossipping questions about the neighbourhood, and causing him to laugh heartily by her comical commentaries upon his answers. This was so very rude, that Constance felt herself called upon, in her new character of a young woman, no longer an infant, to atone for it; and greatly to her credit she quitted the whispered jocularities of the old folks, in order to listen to the elegant dulness of Mr. Weston, who, though he had beyond question breathed the air of mortal life for the space of half a century, enjoyed the happiness of still believing himself to be a young man—a happiness, by the way, much more keenly felt at fifty than at five-and-twenty, for no man, nor woman either, ever felt themselves particularly delighted at being taken for precisely the age at which their parish register rates them; whereas any real or pretended blunder, which adds to our age before we are sixteen, or takes from it after we are thirty, is hailed as pretty nearly the most precious compliment we can receive.

Now, it so happened, that accident had constantly thrown Mr. William Weston among persons older than himself, and the consequence of this fortunate juxtaposition was, that he had truly and sincerely believed himself, through life, to be always and ever in his prime. His father and mother, having married very early, were both still alive, although they had four married daughters, all older than their dear and only son William; and, being vigorous and healthy old people, greatly contributed to the delightful illusion under which he lived. Mr. Weston, senior, had not yet conquered the habit of calling Mr. Weston, junior, 'his dear boy;' and as for his venerable partner, her fond and frequent repetition of the phrase, 'My son William is one of the finest young fellows I know,' was much less the result of habit, than of the daily strengthening conviction of its truth. And then, as to his sisters, Mrs. Johnson, Mrs. Lennox, Mrs. Brand, and Mrs. Smith, they had all been fine-looking women in their day, and not even yet liking the idea of having a younger brother who was an old man, resolutely persisted in speaking of him—ay, and think-

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ing of him too—as a young one. Luckily also for him, these four sisters, notwithstanding the beauty above alluded to, did not by any means marry early, so that their offspring were many of them still children, and the being himself constantly called 'Uncle Willy,' by a parcel of little people, greatly contributed to confirm him in the persuasion that he was, in truth! still quite a young man.'

His having been, at the very early age of thirty-two, appointed joint guardian with Captain Somers of the orphan daughter of the brave Admiral Sir James Ridley, arose from the accident of his having, perhaps, saved the little girl's life by turning the head of a runaway horse, which had very nearly galloped over her. The admiral, who witnessed the transaction, which took place in his own grounds when the child was only two years old, immediately inscribed the young man's name in his will, making him guardian to the daughter, whose minority he probably hoped, nevertheless, to watch over himself, and accompanied the appointment by a legacy of two thousand pounds, to be paid to him, whether he had officiated as guardian or not. Within a year after this codicil was written, the brave admiral died, and Mr. William Weston learned with equal surprise and delight, not only that he was the possessor of two thousand pounds, independent of his papa, but moreover was about to appear to the neighbourhood in the dignified character of guardian to Sir James Ridley's only daughter. Had this appointment fallen upon him twenty years later, it is probable that he would have thought himself too young for it, and by no means impossible that he might have conceived it right to decline a responsibility inconsistent with the habits of light gaiety which he had acquired during his three months' residence in France in 1816. Since that time, as he was ever ready to confess, 'vive la folie' had been his motto, and he might have felt that honour forbad his undertaking a charge for which the *légéreté* of his character so little fitted him. But at the age of thirty-three he had not become fully aware of the youthful *étourderie* which in later life became so conspicuous in him, and therefore accepted the office and the legacy with very nearly equal pleasure.

The weightier business of watching over the minority and the large estate of the young Sir James had fallen wholly on Captain Somers, a brave, noble-hearted, unsophisticated brother-sailor, for whom the admiral felt all the attachment that fields (or decks) nobly fought together are sure to generate, joined to the firm reliance which well-tried honour and honesty as certainly inspire.

It is perhaps hardly fair to state, in addition to this preface, that it had been during the last four or five years, the fixed determination of Mr. William Weston to fall in love with, and, in the fulness of time, eventually to marry, his beautiful and well-endowed ward, Miss Ridley. It is, I say, perhaps hardly fair to mention this fact thus roundly and plainly to the reader; when the delicacy of Mr. William Weston had, for so long a time, prevented his naming it to the lady herself, or to any other being whatever, except his little dog Fanfan. To this cherished little animal, indeed, he was wont to open his heart; and felt the more relief from doing so, because the recipient he had chosen for his hopes and fears for the future, was itself the object which best recalled the happiest days of his past life to his memory. For Fanfan was the great grand-daughter of the darling lapdog he had brought with him from Paris—

> She had her features—bore her name,
> Perhaps some feelings of her heart;

and in a word, more vividly brought back the halcyon days, when for the first and only time of his life he had been his own master, than any other living thing around him.

But though I have thus ventured to forestall the open avowal of his tender passion, the time was rapidly approaching at which it was his purpose to begin slightly hinting at its existence to the object of it himself. He had, indeed, long determined that as soon as convenient after Miss Ridley's coming of age, he should take some steps towards making her acquainted with his intentions. But this disclosure, always perhaps in some degree embarrassing, was in his case most particularly so; for, in consequence of the intimate acquaintance he had made with the customs and manners of France, he could by no means overcome the impropriety which he had thereby learnt to attach to the art of making love to a young lady, instead of addressing her progenitors; yet neither could he so completely overturn the usages of his own country as to decide upon totally passing by his intended bride, without making some slight personal attempts to win her favour.

Years, as I have said, had passed over the head of Mr. William Weston since the idea first suggested itself to him that he should well like to become the possessor of his ward and her fortune. It was true, that for the present he had nothing—not a sixpence—beyond the two thousand pounds bestowed upon him by the grateful admiral. But then his prospects were very good, for his father's estate of fifteen hundred a-year was settled on him, out of which he should only have to pay (when in the course of nature he came into possession of it) two thousand pounds to each of his four sisters, and a life income of five hundred a year to his mother; so that, on the whole, he felt that few young men in the neighbourhood were so well entitled to make a good match as himself.

It was in this frame of mind, that while old Mrs. Ridley and Captain Somers were amusing themselves, according to their wont, by comparing old things and new, Mr. William Weston sat down beside his late ward, and thus addressed her:—

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'Do you think, Miss Ridley, that there is any chance of our getting up a ball or two at Ilfracombe this summer?' Appleby Hut, the residence of Mrs. Ridley, was at no great distance from the romantic village of Linton, on the north coast of Devonshire.

'Upon my word, Mr. Weston, I don't know. All I can say is, that I am perfectly ready to attend them.'

'Ah!—why cannot your words be heard by every one who has power to influence the arrangements?' returned Mr. William Weston. 'I am persuaded that nothing more will be wanting to set the whole thing in motion at once. Oh *Ciel!*—how delighted I should be! I know not why young men should ever feel ashamed of confessing such a feeling—but for myself, I have not the slightest scruple in avowing that I adore dancing, and have never felt so completely in heaven as when in a ball room!—I will not deny, however, that there are circumstances which may, at present, make the idea of a ball at Ilfracombe more than usually agreeable to me.'

As Mr. William Weston spoke these last words, he breathed a light sigh, and fixed his eyes firmly and unequivocally on Miss Ridley's face. But she was not aware of it, having drawn forward her work-frame, and being at that moment very earnestly engaged in counting threads. But having accomplished what she wanted, and ascertained that there were one hundred and seventy-three stitches between the nose of the jackass which she had just finished, and the mouth of the bag she was going to begin, she replied—

'Then why do you not offer yourself as steward, Mr. William Weston?'

'Offer myself!—Ah! Miss Constance Ridley!—there is a degree of delicacy in making an offer of oneself, which will often prevent, or at any rate greatly impede its being done. *Pour moi, j'avoue'*—

And here Mr. Weston junior shrugged his shoulders, as gracefully as it was possible any English shoulders could be shrugged, and for a moment remained silent, but not unoccupied; for his eyes were again settled on Miss Ridley's face, and he had the satisfaction of perceiving that she had got to counting again, a proof perfectly satisfactory, in his estimation, of her feeling that species of embarrassing consciousness, which speaks, more plainly than any words can do, the susceptibility which gentlemen in Mr. William Weston's predicament most anxiously desire to witness. For a moment, as I have said, and perhaps rather more, he remained silent, inwardly rejoicing as the murmured —'Hundred-and-one, hundred-and-two, hundred-and-three,' caught his ear, and then, not drawing his chair, but inclining his tall long-back person towards her, he resumed—

'*Mais voyons*—tell me candidly, Miss Constance, do you think that if I were to offer myself, I should be accepted?'

'Two hundred and ninety-three,' pronounced Constance, suddenly looking up at him; and then, after thinking for a moment, in order to recall what he had said last, she added in a tone that expressed a well-weighed and deliberate conclusion of the truth of what she spoke, 'I have not the shadow of a doubt about it—I am quite certain you would be accepted, and very gratefully too.'

'Charming creature!' inwardly murmured the delighted lover. 'If one must conform to this vulgar, antiquated, insular mode of forming alliances, it is an inexpressible relief to meet with a woman of taste and feeling, who is unwilling to throw any needless difficulties in the way.'

'Luncheon is ready, madam,' said a portly grey-headed serving man, throwing the door open for the party to pass.

Whether this critical interruption stopped any further progress which Mr. William Weston might have intended to make towards the great object, or whether he thought that he had done quite enough for the present, it is impossible to say; but certain it is, that nothing further was said, upon that occasion, about offers of any kind, and that after a very sufficient morning meal had been taken by each of the party, the two ex-guardians rode off together, leaving Constance and her grandmother *tête-à-tête*.

'Now then, grandmamma, as I have your good leave, I shall wait for no more pros and cons from my difficult brother Sir James, but set off immediately to tell the Hartleys that we accept all their kindness *en masse*, as Mr. William Weston would express it. That is to say, *en détail*, that I am ready to set off with them to London whenever they choose to summon me. And to the Markhams I will say that you will be ready to receive my little substitute Mary, with a hearty welcome, whenever it pleases her to come.'

'Do so, missy—and I will sit under the green-house wall, like old pussy, basking in the sun, till you come back.'

CHAPTER II.

A MORNING CALL—MRS. HARTLEY AND TRUE LIBERALITY.

The walk from Appleby Hut, the romantic home of Constance Ridley, to Laurel Hill, the handsome modern dwelling of her friends the Hartleys, need not have occupied above ten minutes—but on this occasion it took Constance thirty; for she set off in a meditative mood, which caused her to move at a pace not more usual to her than to other healthy, active, light-footed individuals of the same age. But now she really had a great many things to think of; the ground, moreover, was covered with cowslips, and it seemed to her as if all the birds in the parish of Appleby had assembled on the hedge-rows by which she passed as if expressly to wish her joy upon coming of age.

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There may, perhaps, be some young ladies of wavering bloom, whose *beauté de diable*, the only kind of which they could ever boast, being decidedly on the wane at twenty-two, may find it exceedingly unnatural that Constance should consider the having arrived at twenty-one as a subject of congratulation. But whatever they may think of it, I can assure them that such was the fact. Constance Ridley was inexpressibly rejoiced that this sign-post of mature existence was reached, and not even the shadow of a shade crossed her mind from any fears of fading freshness or diminished charms.

But that the historian's *ipse dixit* may not appear too absolute, it may not be amiss to state what sort of person Constance Ridley was at the time this narrative begins: or rather, perhaps, it may be better, and of more extensive utility to the public, to give a brief sketch of that species of womankind which need not tremble at having numbered twenty-one years.

A heathful, well-constructed frame of middle height, indicating no decided propensity either to growing fat or to growing thin—features on harmonious terms with one another, no individual amongst them threatening to overbear the rest, and in progress of time to become the lord of all—complexion smooth and clear, but by no means fresh-coloured, or dazzling the eye by any York and Lancaster combination of red and white—teeth regular, but not small; and white, but not blue-white—eyes that have speculation in them, and the power, when there is reason for it, of uttering a little eloquence in aid of the tongue—small hands and feet—a pleasing voice—soft, dark, and abundant hair, not given to premature grayness—and thirty thousand pounds. Young ladies upon this pattern have no cause whatever to covet a perpetuity of teenism, and upon this pattern was formed Constance Ridley.

In addition also to these efficient antidotes to fear, Miss Ridley had several individual causes for joy, at feeling herself free from the restraints which had attended her minority. Her brother Sir James, though only six years older than herself, had been joined with the two gentlemen before mentioned, as guardian to her person and property; and being a not very wise, but exceedingly obstinate young man, with a very overweening opinion of his own consequence, a very stedfast adherence to his own will, and a very firm conviction that it was morally impossible he should ever be wrong, he and his lovely sister had of late years differed upon many points; and as his exercise of authority had increased in exactly the same proportion as the necessity for it had become less, the emancipation from it altogether was very naturally hailed as a relief.

No two members of the same family could be well more unlike in all moral and intellectual attributes than were Sir James Ridley and his sister. Everything belonging to or emanating from the mind of the brother, was little, trifling, and dwarfish. Even his faults were on a small scale, never swelling into atrocity, nor rising into magnitude of any kind; while his virtues, if any of his qualities could be so named, consisted wholly in small observances of little laws, very well calculated to make him pass muster in a drawing-room, or even at a club-house, but holding no more importance in the formation of a reasonable man, than a bucket of whitewash bestowed upon the belfry doors, in that of a gothic cathedral.

In all this, his sister was very completely the reverse. She had many noble qualities, and many important failings also; but in none of these was there littleness, either in quality or extent; and it may be offered in proof of this, that her heart now swelled high at the consciousness of power that might enable her to do good, and of freedom which would permit her to seek out and cherish all those within her reach, whom nature seemed to have selected as her friends: while no inconsiderable quality of self-will mixed itself with these really noble feelings, rendering it pretty much a matter of chance whether they were likely to lead her right or wrong.

The ambition which decidedly constituted her prevailing hobby, was that of making personal acquaintance with those who in any way had acquired honourable fame. She would have walked, like Madame Cottin's Elizabeth, from Siberia to Moscow, to have looked upon the immortal Wellington, or have gone without her dinner for a twelvemonth to have heard one living word from the lips of those whose pens have won them glory and renown.

There was not, however, the slightest mixture in this ambition of the Leo-hunting feeling. Had she been the mistress of a thousand mansions, she would never have expended a thought, or wasted a moment, in seeking to collect celebrities for the amusement of her friends. No vanity of any kind whatever mixed itself with her ambition. There might be, and in truth there was, enough of ignorance in her notions on the subject—but there was nothing little, nothing paltry in them.

'I must love somebody,' thought Constance; 'my temper, my nature require it. And is it not more reasonable—I might say more pious—to look out for those upon whom Nature has stamped her eternal seal, marking them as superior to the herd, than to content myself by listlessly picking and choosing among those whom chance has thrown in my way, without asking of the intellect which God has given me, whether they are worth loving or not?'

A vast many other thoughts, some wiser, perhaps, and some less wise, restrained the usual activity of her steps, as she strolled onwards towards Laurel Hill: but enough has been said to explain, in some degree, why Constance was so very glad that

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she was twenty-one, and for the future her acts and deeds must speak for themselves.

Laurel Hill, though a thousand times less beautiful in its loneliness than the wild little domain of Appleby Hut, had nevertheless some pretty enjoyable points about it, and one of these was the flower-bordered gravel-walk which led from its extensive paddock across the lawn, and into the breakfast-parlour window.

It was by this entrance that Miss Ridley made her appearance in the midst of the Hartley family, consisting of a widowed mother of fifty, and three daughters, aged twenty, twenty-two, and twenty-four.

'Is it finished? Is it done, darling?' exclaimed the eldest Miss Hartley, starting from her seat as soon as her friend appeared, and running towards her with extended hands.

'Yes, Penelope! Thank heaven! we have got through it all, and, thanks to dear good Captain Somers, with greatly less torment and tediousness than I expected; and here I stand, a free woman, with a tolerably stout will of my own, and nobody living having the power to say to me, "You sha'n't."'

'And with how much accumulation, my dear?' demanded Mrs. Hartley, laying down the Edinburgh Review while she asked the question. 'Something pretty considerable, I dare say.'

'I have thirty thousand pounds, Captain Somers says,' replied Constance, colouring a little at having so very direct a question to answer.

'Thirty thousand pounds!' exclaimed Miss Caroline Hartley, the youngest sister. 'Oh, you happy girl! How I do envy you!'

'And your brother, dearest Constance?' said Margaret, the second sister, 'did he arrive last night?'

'No, not he,' returned Constance, laughing. 'I suspected that he would make a deputy of Captain Somers the moment I heard that he had promised to accompany Mr. Marsh to the levée.'

'You don't say so, my dear,' said Mrs. Hartley. 'That is extraordinary, to be sure, on such an occasion. But I am willing to flatter myself, dear Constance, that he had a better reason for his absence than merely accompanying this Mr. Marsh, or Mr. anybody else, to the levée; I really flatter myself that Sir James Ridley felt the necessity of appearing at St. James's to be paramount—that it was, in short, his first duty, and therefore that every other must give way to it.'

'If so, Mrs. Hartley, he was very right to stay, and would have been very wrong to come,' replied Constance gaily. 'At any rate, we did very well without him—and here I am, as I told you, free as air, and ready to bestow myself upon you whenever you summon me.'

'And that will be on the third of next month, my dear Miss Ridley, and most proud and happy shall I be to have you under my protection. We have had a letter this very morning from Bates. He has been clever enough to secure for us the very same house in Bruton Street that we had last year, and I really do not know another that I should like so well. It is enormously dear, to be sure, but I remembered, dearest Constance, that you were to be with us, and have already despatched an answer, telling him to engage it from the fourth of April to the fourth of July.'

'Delightful!' cried Constance. 'How can I ever thank you enough, dearest Mrs. Hartley! And how soon after you get to town do you think your regular campaign will begin?—It will be such a dreadful pity to lose any time.'

'Trust mamma, dear, for not losing time,' said Miss Hartley, laughing. 'Nobody understands better how to manage matters of this kind than my mother. She ought to take out a patent for the species of machinery she has invented for making fashionable movements and economical arrangements dovetail into each other.'

'Nonsense, Penelope,' returned the animated Mrs. Hartley, slightly knitting her brows. 'Nothing can be so childish as fancying everything extraordinary that you do not perfectly understand. My secret, Miss Ridley, for not losing time in town, after a house is secured, is simply this:—the moment I hear finally from Bates, I despatch a letter to my stationer, ordering a few thousand cards to be immediately printed for me and my daughters, with the address of the mansion he has secured, and then, about four or five days before we start ourselves, I send off the coachman with his horses, and as soon as he arrives in town, he goes to the stationer's, takes the cards, and leaves a few hundreds of them at different houses, according to a list that he takes up with him. This signal given, the drama begins at once, and it frequently happens that by the time I arrive I find a table covered with visiting cards and invitations—and I heartily hope, my dear, for your sake, that so it will prove on the present occasion—I have left nothing undone, I assure you.'

'Dear, dear Mrs. Hartley!' returned Constance, 'how delightful it is to make one's first appearance under the auspices of such a manager! But there is one point that I fear will puzzle you sadly—how will you be able to get us all invited? Remember that I positively never will go anywhere at the expense of keeping either of my friends at home.'

'It is very amiable of you to say so, and I am so perfectly sure you mean it, that I would on no account ever ask you to break through a resolution so nobly taken. But the fact is, my dear, that there are very few occasions upon which it would be possible for me to take you, without your receiving a distinct invitation—it is such very *mauvais ton* to attempt it, that it would, in my opi-

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nion, be doing a very cruel injury to you. No, my dearest Miss Ridley, that is not the way in which you must be introduced to the London world.'

'But how else can I be introduced, Mrs. Hartley?' demanded Constance, looking rather dismayed.

'By appearing to be what you really are, my dear—a young lady of fortune and consequence. Establish this, and trust me that you will have more invitations than you will find it possible to accept.'

'And how is it to be achieved?' asked Constance, laughing. 'There is no Elegant Advertiser, or Young Ladies' Calendar, is there, by which the *beau monde* may be officially informed that a young lady of fortune and consequence is ready to go wherever she is invited?'

'There is the "Morning Post," my dear,' replied Mrs. Hartley, gravely.

'Is it absolutely necessary that I should put a paragraph in the "Morning Post" to that effect?' demanded Miss Ridley.

'Not precisely as you have worded it, perhaps; but something of the sort must certainly be done. However, I would recommend you to leave all that to me, my dear. There are ways and means without number by which this sort of intelligence may be very efficiently circulated among the chosen set whom it concerns, without requiring the subject of it to draw up an advertisement for herself; and when the said subject can so well establish the truth of all the prettiest puffs that can be set going round the coteries as you, dear Constance, the task of the agent in such a business is by no means difficult. But then I must stipulate for *carte blanche*, with leave to do and say whatever I please upon the subject.'

'My dearest Mrs. Hartley,' returned Constance, laughing very heartily, 'you have my free leave to do and say all and everything that you in your wisdom, may deem best, for the purpose of opening to me as many doors in London as have anything within them worth seeing. If you think it will answer, say, I entreat you, that I am "more than common tall," with the form of a nymph, the port of a goddess, and the face of a houri; say that Grisi once heard me sing, and declared that nothing should ever induce her to open her lips again in my presence; that Taglioni saw me dance, and fell into a swoon from mere hopelessness of emulation; that my tresses are of gold, my eyes imported direct from heaven, with the sparkle of the stars and the colour of the firmament; say all this, and more too, if it so please you, dear lady; only promise, in return, that you will secure my *entrée*—and if you can manage it without my being pointed at as I drive along the streets, so much the better.'

'Agreed,' replied Mrs. Hartley, with perfect good humour. 'And all I shall require in return is, that you go to THE *marchande des modes par excellence*, THE shoemaker, THE hairdresser, &c. &c. &c., which I shall recommend. Without this, I cannot undertake your *début*, for without this it is impossible that I can, notwithstanding your charming person, feel perfectly confident that you will be presentable.'

'I will in all my best obey you, madam,' replied Constance, bending gracefully her beautiful head. 'And now I must retreat; for before I return home I must call at the Markhams, and settle about Mary's coming to the Hut during my absence.'

'Stay one moment, Miss Ridley,' said Mrs. Hartley, rising. 'It is still quite early, and you will have time enough to call at Mr. Markham's, if you leave us half an hour hence; but if you consent to bestow this half hour, it must be given to myself alone. Don't think me a tyrant or an extortioner, but I must have you to myself for half an hour. In truth, I cannot with a safe conscience undertake the important charge you are about to trust to me with such generous confidence, without speaking to you with perfect freedom upon one or two points on which it is essential that we should perfectly understand each other. Will you come with me to my dressing-room?'

'Certainly,' said Constance, rising with alacrity, but not without a slight misgiving that she was about to listen to a lecture upon some anticipated *gaucherie*, or rustic misdemeanour, into which, nevertheless, she might find it very difficult to avoid falling.

Mrs. Hartley led the way in silence, and Constance followed, till they reached the neat, new chintz-lined little apartment, which, since the commencement of her well-jointured widowhood, the mistress of the mansion had fitted up for her own especial use and consolation. It was, indeed, a light, cheerful, agreeable room, and well calculated for the reveries of a lady who so greatly preferred that all she looked upon should be *couleur de rose*.

'Sit down, dear, and let me speak to you with the most perfect candour,' said Mrs. Hartley, 'without which, you must agree with me in feeling, there can be no lasting hope of enjoyment in such an excursion as that which we are going to undertake together—do you not agree with me?'

'Oh! certainly,' said Constance, seating herself in the soft arm-chair that was pointed out to her.

'Well, then, without wasting your time or my own by a word of preface, I will explain myself at once. But remember, dear Constance, that all I say to you is in confidence, and that I rely implicitly upon your not repeating it to any one.'

'I shall never repeat anything that you say to me in confidence, Mrs. Hartley,' replied Constance, colouring.

'I am sure of it, dear girl, or I would not address you as I now do with all the openness and sincerity of a confiding friend. You are aware, I dare say—for who is not?—that the fortunes of my three dear girls are greatly below what might be expected from their station and appearance in life.

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Mr. Hartley's fine property in Oxfordshire, being all entailed, left us at his death, and very nearly all he had beside was settled on me at our marriage, together with the whole of my own fortune; an arrangement exceedingly generous on his part, but which, as you must perceive, leaves my dear children more dependent on me than they ought to be.'

'It is very fortunate, at any rate, Mrs. Hartley, that they are not dependent upon any one else,' replied Constance, a good deal puzzled to guess why so affectionate a mother should speak of this dependence in so pathetic an accent.

'True, my dear, true. But it is not the less my duty to atone to them by every method in my power, for an arrangement which cannot but be painful to them.'

'Why in the world,' thought Constance, 'does she not set all right, by altering the arrangement, and giving the girls at once exactly what she thinks they ought to have?' She thought it best, however, not to say this, lest it might look like giving uncalled-for advice.

'Such being our position,' resumed Mrs. Hartley, 'every effort of my life is directed towards bringing them forward with every possible advantage: and to obtain this object I do many things, believe me, my dear Miss Ridley, that I would not do without it. Were I childless, my income would fully suffice for all my wants and wishes, and never should I be tempted to wish for a single moment to appear richer than I am. But now the case is different, widely different; and I feel that I owe to them, poor dears, to put forth all the little talent with which nature has endowed me, in order to make as good an appearance as possible. Do I make myself understood, my dear Miss Ridley?'

Had Constance chosen to answer sincerely, she would undoubtedly have said 'No;' but there was in the tone and manner of Mrs. Hartley, such an appearance of earnestness and candour, of so much friendly unreserve, and so much devoted attachment to her children, that she had not courage to call in question her logic; and in return to this appeal to her understanding, she only bowed.

'Very well, then,' resumed Mrs. Hartley, looking entirely satisfied; 'everything else will be perfectly intelligible. In asking you to join us in our excursion to town this year, I certainly gratify, in the highest degree, the wishes of all my dear children, as well as my own. But I will own to you frankly, my dear Miss Ridley, that in the peculiar circumstances in which I am placed, and which I have just indulged myself by explaining to you, I could not possibly have gratified either of their wishes or my own in this matter, had you not been a young lady of fortune. You look surprised, my dear, and your speaking eyes seem to ask how your fortune can make any difference either to them or to me? And this brings me to the most painful part of my communication —painful, because, notwithstanding the liberal feelings on which I know and feel that all my actions are founded, I cannot help experiencing some degree of repugnance to speaking to you with the sincerity which the nature of the business demands. In a word, dearest Miss Ridley, I could not, in justice to my poor dear girls, have asked you to join us, had I not felt sure that you would, on one or two points, be willing to share our expenses.'

Nothing could exceed the surprise of Constance at hearing this speech. Mrs. Hartley always appeared to consider herself, and was universally considered by the neighbourhood, as the first person in it. Her establishment was large, and to all appearance perfectly *bien monté;* and she would as soon have thought of carrying a little cash in the mouth of her reticule to pay for her commons when invited to dine at Laurel Hill, as to have offered to do what Mrs. Hartley now proposed to her. Her difficulties as to what she should reply were, however, all over, and she answered with the greatest readiness, and without a shadow of embarrassment, 'I really feel myself greatly indebted to you, Mrs. Hartley, for the candour with which you have spoken to me. My pleasure in being with you will be very greatly increased by it, and I have only to beg that you will name the sum which you will kindly permit me to contribute.'

'Charming creature!' exclaimed Mrs. Hartley, pressing her handkerchief to her eyes. 'How fully do you justify the opinion I have ever had of your temper, your heart, and your understanding! How many girls are there to whom I could not have said what I have done to you, if my life depended on it? I had thought, my dear Miss Ridley, to have asked you to enable me to take an opera-box for the remainder of the season, by paying half the rent of it; and have stated with equal frankness that I should find difficulty in keeping my horses and carriage at livery without your help. But it now strikes me that it would be more consonant to your generous temper, if I named a sum at once, which should suffice to give me the assistance I want, without troubling you with details. Do I make myself understood, my dear?'

'Perfectly, ma'am,' replied Constance eagerly; 'I shall greatly prefer the method you now propose.'

'Well, then, sweet girl, I will torment you no longer by keeping you shut up here on this *tête-à-tête* committee of ways and means, but frankly tell you at once, that three hundred pounds from you will suffice to put me completely at my ease, and enable me to do what I consider as my duty to my poor dear children, without depriving you of any portion of the amusement which you have so good a right to expect. Do I make myself understood?'

'Perfectly,' again responded Constance; and rising from her chair, she held out her hand to Mrs. Hartley, and added, 'The sum you have named, dear Mrs. Hartley, shall

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be paid to you by a cheque on my London banker, as soon as we get to town. And now good-bye. Of course we shall all of us have a good deal to do before we set off: but I hope you will all come and dine with us first, that you may take leave of grandmamma. Good-bye!'

'Good-bye, dearest,' returned Mrs. Hartley, affectionately wringing her hand; and Constance turned to go. But ere she had passed the door, Mrs. Hartley recalled her to say—'By the way, my dear, it would be a great advantage to you, while in town, to have your brother, Sir James, as much with you as possible. I hope his little foolish whim last year, about thinking it best that you should not go to London, did not lead to anything like a quarrel?'

'O dear no, ma'am—not at all. I never contradict my brother on any trifling matters, and nothing whatever of importance occurred when he was last at home, so that we parted the best friends in the world.'

'That's well. He is in London, is he not?'

'O yes, I believe so. It is the proper season for fine folks to be there, and so, of course, he would not be absent for the world.'

'He is a most elegant creature, certainly,' cried Mrs. Hartley, shaking her head with a sort of affectionate smile. 'It is quite impossible not to admire him. Though I will not deny that he has his faults; the greatest proof of which is, that he has found it possible to disagree with you, my dear, on any point—for nobody who knows anything of you can believe, for a single instant, that you could be to blame. However, I am delighted to hear that you are on good terms again; and I shall consider it as perfectly my duty to have him as much with us as possible in town; for I know the importance which such a brother gives better than you do, my dear. On the chapter concerning invitations, for instance, an immense deal might be said respecting handsome young brothers, with a title and seven thousand a year. But how shamefully am I keeping you! Run down stairs, dearest, as fast as you can, or I shall be sure to stop you again.'

Constance smiled, nodded her head, and disappeared. But when she reached the breakfast-room, she found it impossible to pass through it as rapidly as she intended, for all the three sisters seized upon her at once, declaring that she must give as much time to them as she had done to their mamma.

'What can my mother have wanted this long *tête-à-tête* for, Constance?' demanded Miss Hartley, with less of mere curiosity, and more of real interest, than was displayed by either of her sisters. 'Has it been a lecture on marriages, suitable and unsuitable, or only hints on the wardrobe of a young lady of fashion?'

'Neither the one nor the other, Penelope; your mother has only been talking to me of the general scheme of her management while living in town.'

'Talking to you of the general scheme of her management while living in town?' said Margaret, raising her eyebrows into a look of considerable surprise; 'I hope you approve it, Miss Ridley?'

'Perfectly,' replied Constance, puzzled, in her turn, as to how much Mrs. Hartley might have confided to her avowedly favourite daughter respecting her remunerating project.

The conversation then rambled on to a variety of subjects, all of deep interest to four young ladies, the eldest of whom was but twenty-four years of age, and all on the eve of setting off for London, for the express purpose of amusing themselves. But at length, Constance, though exceedingly well entertained, and feeling at least as deep an interest in the theme as any one of them, exerted herself to break up the chattering conclave.

'I positively must go,' she said, 'though I have a hundred more questions to ask. But if I go home without calling on Mary Markham, grandmamma will have excellent reason to think that I have forgotten her affairs while paying the most persevering attention to my own.'

Adieus were then exchanged. Constance walked out through the window at which she had entered, and soon after leaving Mrs. Hartley's beautiful paddock, crossed the high road, and turned down a shady green lane, which led her to a dwelling of much less showy pretensions and appearance than Laurel hill.

CHAPTER III.

LIEUTENANT MARKHAM—HIS HOUSE AND FAMILY.

Nestled closely into a rocky nook, the sides of which were everywhere hung about with a tangled profusion of creeping plants, stood the humble dwelling of Lieutenant Markham. On a sunny slope to the right lay a small garden, surrounded by a quickset hedge; not an inch of the profitable little plot thus enclosed but was turned to good account, being equally valuable to the master of it as an occupation and a means of supply. In front of the door, and of the one little parlour of the mansion, was a lawn of miniature dimensions, but so beautiful in position as once on a time to have made the owner of a very noble palace declare, that he would not only have joyfully given up the noblest room in his house to possess it, but would have accompanied the exchange with an annual rent of a hundred pounds. But neither the will of a rich man, nor the power of his wealth, can transfer the cosy enchantment of a little hollow on the banks of the Lin to the expansive enclosures of a princely Stow, or the wide-spreading plains of a Blenheim. The whole of Lieutenant Markham's domain did not amount to above the third of an acre, but,

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such as it was, it was not only his own, but was safe from the danger of being bribed away from him by gold as a residence, for nobody but a sailor, used to the close limits of the quarter-deck, would ever have conceived it possible to bring home a wife to such a toy of a house, or to bring up a family with so very scanty an allowance of elbow-room. But here the gay-hearted, the happy-tempered man had lived for the last five-and-twenty years, without ever for a moment perceiving that it was too small. His long-wished-for, but at length happy union, had been blessed with a son and two daughters. The son, now nearly thirty years of age, and certainly one of the finest young men in England, was in his own profession; and the only circumstance which the worthy lieutenant had ever permitted himself to consider as a misfortune, was the seeing this gallant fellow still of no higher rank than himself, and apparently about as certain of remaining in it. His eldest girl, now about twenty-seven, was one of those good-at-need specimens of womankind, whom all persons domestically intimate with her must be sure to designate as, 'a perfect treasure;' and his youngest, by several years the junior of the family, was the little Mary Markham whom Miss Ridley was come expressly to visit, and who was the godchild and especial pet of the venerable mistress of Appleby Hut.

Constance seldom or never called at Rock Cottage without paying her compliments to the view which stretched before the little lawn, before she entered to salute its inhabitants. As usual, she now walked to the edge of the soft, well-shorn, mossy grass-plot, from whence descended a precipice of a hundred feet, which, notwithstanding the large and frequent masses of rock projecting from it, was richly covered with luxurious forest trees down to the very edge of the clear stream that rushed in a brisk rapid past its foot. The only fence of the little domain on this side was the impracticable nature of the ground, and certainly nothing less agile than a mountain goat could have entered upon the premises in that direction, though to have quitted them in the most rapid manner imaginable would have required no further exertion than stepping beyond the verge of the smooth hanging level at the summit, after which the descent into the stream would have been as prompt as the boughs and the crags would permit.

Beyond the less precipitous, but equally wooded bank on the opposite side of the stream, stretched a long narrow ridge of down, and beyond this the sea lay tranquilly glittering beneath the setting sun.

'Beautiful! beautiful! beautiful!' exclaimed Constance, clasping her hands in ecstasy, though she looked upon the scene for the hundredth time, and moreover guessed not that anybody heard her. But luckily for his own gratification the master of this fairy nook, being in the act of passing out from his kitchen-garden, with spade and rake on his shoulder, just as Miss Ridley stationed herself on her favourite spot, had the pleasure of hearing her exclamation, and two steps bringing him to her side, he answered it by saying, 'It is small, very small, Miss Ridley, but it is pretty, sure enough, and there are few who seem to like it better than you do. You have a good deal of fine taste, I have a notion, and so has our Mary. She looks out from this very bit sometimes, just here at the beach between the two old apple trees, as if she longed to kneel down upon the moss, and thank God for it. It is a great blessing, my dear Miss Constance, after beating about the ocean in one's young days, to have such a harbour as this to creep into at last; and I don't like it the less either, for giving me a peep at my old friend and foe. There would be something shocking to me in never being able to look upon the sea. It is a pretty bit, to be sure.'

'I should be afraid, Mr. Markham,' replied Constance, 'that neither you nor your family could ever feel such a pleasure in any other scenery. Many of us hereabouts talk of our pretty views, and our beautiful grounds, but who is there that can show anything like this?'

'I am not sure but what you are right,' said the contented proprietor, setting down his tools against the bench, and folding his arms across his breast, to enjoy the luxury of looking without annoyance of any kind. 'I am not sure but what you are right, Miss Ridley. And yet it seems like great presumption for me to say so too. And to you of all people in the world, with your beautiful wood-walks, and vistas so skilfully opened here and there, to let in a view of the sea. The Hut is a very beautiful place, Miss Ridley, and yet I won't deny that I doubt your having anything quite equal to this black foreground with that golden ocean behind it. I wonder where our Mary is—she never ought to miss such a sunset as this.'

'Mary and sunset,' repeated Constance; 'both warn me to turn away from this sight, all glorious as it is, for I must give her a message from grandmamma, and then I must run away home before it is dark, or I shall get scolded, let me be as eloquent as I may about the beauty of your sunset. Do you think I shall find Mary in the parlour, Mr. Markham?'

'Yes, I do, my dear,' said the old gentleman, again shouldering his implements, and then walking off before her.

Not only was Mary Markham in the parlour, but her mother also, and both were busily engaged at needle-work; not of the luxurious species which turns labour into play, by bringing all the colours of the rainbow into comical juxtaposition, and making the fleece of an innocent lambkin mimic the tawny horrors of a lion's mane. Their work was really work, though performed with a cheerful spirit, for Mrs. Markham was mending a shirt, and Mary making one.

It is a custom of such established usage among modern historians [of my class]

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never to introduce a new personage upon their pages without prefacing his or her sayings and doing by a portrait, that I may not omit it in mine. Here therefore shall follow a sketch of Mrs. Markham and her daughter Mary.

Mrs. Markham was already dipping into that portion of human life which it is customary to call the vale or valley of existence. The correctness of the metaphor may be questionable, I think; for whereas the abstract notion of a valley brings with it all sorts of flowery images, blooming blossoms, ripening fruit, and laughing harvest, the abstract notion of old age brings with it something exceedingly like a contrast to all this. In plain English, however, Mrs. Markham was growing old. Her love for her brave-hearted but gentle-spirited husband had begun exactly forty-five years before, both the parties having at that time reached the precise age, or rather ages, which a French poet, and an English one after him, declares to be the fittest for love; for often at that happy time, and before the graver portion of the affair converted songs into sighs, had pretty Mary Lee [the venerable lady in question] carolled

'I'm sweet fifteen, he's one year more.'

Another fifteen years of life had, however, worn away before there was the slightest chance of their having bread to eat if they married. They waited, therefore, with what patience they could, till the lady's fortune came to her; and then, with the hopes of a little family to share their superfluities, married upon the interest of five thousand pounds, and the half-pay of a lieutenant in the navy. Both of them were 'gently born,' and many were the warnings, and the scornings, the jokes, and the gibes, which the wedding called forth from the better-off-in-the-world relatives on both sides. But at thirty, when people are really in earnest, they generally do what they like in such matters; and in this case, at least, it would have been a sad thing had it been otherwise, for never did a union prosper better. The outlay of about four hundred pounds had put them in possession of the abode they still inhabited, and in spite of all the predictions hurled about their ears, of leisurely repentance after *hasty* marriages, they had been very considerably more contented, and immeasurably happier, than ninety-nine out of every hundred of created beings. But then they never deviated, nor wished to deviate, from the simple mode of life which they had lain down for themselves before they married; and the consequence was, that they had positively never endured any suffering whatever from their poverty. Had their family consisted of twelve instead of three, it might have been different; but as it was, there was not a single household in the wide-spreading county of Devon where the expenditure more comfortably matched itself to the income than that of Lieutenant Markham.

As to his wife, she did not seem yet to have recovered from the joy which her wedding had brought with it. There was even a mixture of hilarity in every thought that came into her head, and every feeling that touched her heart; her life was a continual act of thanksgiving; and not all the preaching in the world could have induced her to believe that men and women were sent upon the earth like sinners into a penitentiary, or that the divine scheme for human existence was in any degree resembling that of the tread-mill. When she heard talk of an unfortunate Mr. This, or Mr. That, who was utterly ruined, or of executions in houses where, poor souls! there had never been gambling nor vice of any kind, and nothing but straining and striving to bring up a large family respectably, i. e. not according to their own station, but to that of the rank next above them—she was wont to say, 'Quite a mistake—quite a mistake indeed! They have blundered sadly, those gentlemen and ladies; for when, in the matter of keeping house, people set out wrong, it is curious to see how altogether out of the way they get before they come to the end of their journey.'

And truly Mrs. Markham was right. Living within the income which chance or inheritance has assigned us, is not less a sign of worldly wisdom than of christian honesty. Had Lieutenant Markham and his wife, when taking possession of their mossy nest, attempted to associate with their wealthy neighbours, with the intention of classing themselves in the same rank, every step they had taken, and every act they had done, or attempted to do, would have been canvassed and condemned; while, in exact proportion as they mixed themselves in vain efforts to seem what they were not, their friends and acquaintance would have become more painfully aware of what they were. It is by no means uncommon to hear people calling themselves high-spirited, and confessing to the having a proper pride, declare that they 'would rather, ten hundred times, never set eyes on any human being, than associate with anybody, unless upon a footing of equality.'—'So be it then,' is the only rational answer to such noble-minded individuals. But the Markhams were less sublime, and the consequence was, that though they began by knowing nobody, they had at this time arrived at being the pet family of the whole neighbourhood; nay, it is by no means certain that Captain Somers was not as much influenced in bringing his veteran honours and his handsome fortune into the country by the near neighbourhood of Lieutenant Markham, as by that of Admiral Ridley.

The appearance of Constance was always hailed as a joyful event at Rock Cabin, and Mrs. Markham and her daughter Mary exclaimed together at the same moment, 'Oh! here is dear Miss Ridley!'

'But she has not a moment to stay with you, my dear friends,' replied Constance—'see how dark it is getting, and just fancy

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grandmamma's fidget, if I do not make my appearance before the stars! I must therefore only stay one half minute to ask if Mary will be ready to come to the Hut by the third of next month?'

'The third of next month, my dear!—are we really going to lose you the third of next month!—Well, it is a blessing, I am sure, to see you look so well and so happy as you do; and as for your dear good grandmamma, never you fret yourself about her, Miss Ridley. Our Mary will take as much care of her as you would do your own self, and there's nobody that knows Mary but will be ready to give her a good word as a nurse, that is, in case nursing was wanted, which I dare to say will not be the case.'

'And you, dear Mary,' said Constance, 'do you really feel as ready and willing as you were at first, to take charge of your dear old godmother? I shall expect you, dear, to be a most punctual and faithful correspondent, never failing to write twice a week, and never concealing anything from me, if the darling old woman should have anything the matter with her—will you promise and vow all this, dear?'

'Yes, I will, and keep it too,' returned the blushing but beautiful looking Mary. 'My only trouble, Miss Ridley, is, that she will be always thinking so of you, and missing you so very much, that nothing I can do will make her quite happy.'

'You have no reason to fear that, Mary; next to myself, you are decidedly the person she likes best; and I am by no means sure that you may not be first, by the time I return. But what will you do without your Mary, Mrs. Markham?'

'Very well, Miss Ridley—I shall do very well without her, for all I love her so,' replied Mrs. Markham. 'For, in the first place, I know that she likes to go, and that is reason good why I should be contented without her; and then my Betsy is such a treasure that it is quite impossible I can really want her.'

'God bless you, one and all,' said Constance, holding out a hand to each; 'you are always everything that is good and kind. I shall certainly see you again before I go, Mrs. Markham. Good-bye,—love to Betsy —good-bye.' And the gay and hopeful Constance bounded away to her home, with all her business settled, and without a sorrow in the world.

CHAPTER IV.

JOURNEY TO AND ARRIVAL IN LONDON.

The third of April came, and was all a third of April should be, when a party of ladies, bent upon enjoyment, set off from a distant country to taste the spring-tide delights of London. A heavy shower had fallen before their opening eyes had given signal that the day was come—the dust was laid, the sun was shining, the birds singing, the primroses sleeping, the violets breathing vigorously, and the post-horses pricking their ears, and looking as spruce as if they had nothing to do but trot out a little for their own amusement.

Who, at such a time, could think of drawing parallels between green fields and dusty streets, air redolent of heaven, and the same article emanating from other sources, or conjure up disagreeable contrast between the snow-white fleeces of the 'silly sheep,' and the graceful gambols of their playful lambs, with the aspect and manœuvrings of that portion of dumb life to be seen in the streets of our great metropolis? Certainly, not the party snugly packed into Mrs. Hartley's barouche; and they would have been little better than geese if they could. Wise folks, in travelling from the town to the country, think of these things; but folks equally wise, in travelling from the country to the town, employ their thoughts differently. The party we are following was, on the whole, a very sensible party, extremely well calculated for the business they were upon, and nothing farther could be wished for, respecting the entire townwardness of their thoughts, excepting in the case of one individual. Penelope Hartley greatly disliked London; but, on the other hand, she greatly liked Constance Ridley; so she, too, was better pleased than was usual with her at this season of annual migration, and looked smilingly in the face of her friend, enjoying with very true sympathy the animated look of expectation, and lively anticipation of new delight, which she read there.

Few young ladies, indeed, of twenty-one, with Miss Ridley's pecuniary facilities for going and coming, have seen so little beyond their native shades as she had done. This had arisen solely from the conduct of her brother. Sir James Ridley was no very uncommon character; he was only a very troublesome man, shrinking from every act, whether of mind or body, which required manly energy, but having at the same time a most inordinate propensity for ruling and regulating the affairs of all his friends and acquaintance. Poor Constance having unhappily been made his ward, had of course become a most obvious and eligible object for ceaseless interference. Fortunately, while she continued under the hands of the accomplished and truly excellent woman who had been engaged by old Mrs. Ridley as her governess, the young baronet had not thought her of sufficient consequence in the world to merit much of his care and attention. But when she had reached the age of eighteen, her governess left her, to fulfil a matrimonial engagement of some ten years standing: and a few months afterwards, Constance received a pressing invitation from a family who were old friends of her father, and who from time to time had kept up their interest in his pretty orphan, by visiting his mother, to pay them a visit in Bath. But this invitation she was peremp-

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torily forbad to accept by her fraternal guardian; for no other reason that either she or her grandmother could discover, than that his consent had not been formally requested by the friendly inviters. In order to atone for this disappointment, as he said, Sir James made an arrangement for her about a month afterwards, which, if acceded to on her part, would have made her the guest of a lady whom she had never seen in her life; and to this she refused her consent quite as peremptorily as he had done before. More than one case of nearly the same kind recurred during the two following years, the consequence of which was, a firm and firmly kept resolution on the part of the young lady to decline every proposal for leaving her grandmother's roof, even for a single night, till she was at liberty to accept such without any reference to her brother.

This capriciously assumed authority, and very sturdy resistance, caused for a time a considerable degree of coldness between the brother and sister. But by degrees Constance began to feel that her brother meant no personal unkindness to her, acting merely in conformity to what Mr. Owen would call an organic propensity of his conformation—or, in other words, that he was a consequential busy-body, who really believed that nobody knew so well as himself what was best to be done on all occasions. No sooner had she made up her mind upon this point, than her system of tactics became moulded upon the *suaviter in modo, fortiter in re*, so strongly recommended by Lord Chesterfield. She listened with the most amiable docility to all his dogmatical instructions, from the management of the lap-dog to the management of herself; heard him dilate on his own accurate knowledge of the world and all things in it, without either yawning or laughing; and was fortunate enough to make him feel himself a person of first-rate importance in her eyes, without permitting herself, in any single instance, to do anything that she either disliked or disapproved. They were now, therefore, on perfectly good terms, Sir James being persuaded that his sister had the highest opinion of his judgment, and Constance, comfortably aware that, having reached twenty-one, her movements were for the future entirely at her own command, let her be obliged, in sisterly courtesy, to listen to as much windy declamation as she might.

Everything, therefore, contributed to the delight with which she set off on her present expedition. Past restraint endeared present freedom, and novelty, delightful to all, was to her doubly so, from never having changed her residence, as long back as her memory reached, even for a single day.

The journey was prosperous and agreeable in every way; nor did Constance feel it any drawback to her felicity, when Mrs. Hartley, taking her apart the first time they left the carriage for refreshment, put a pencilled memorandum, made in the carriage, into her hand, saying,

'I know, dearest love, that you would not be pleased did I refuse to let you pay your share of the post-horses; I have, therefore, set down here the proportion for you and your maid. Shall I go it over with you?'

'O dear no, by no means,' said Constance, drawing out her purse: 'I am very much obliged to you for taking all the trouble for me.'

'Dear girl!' exclaimed Mrs. Hartley, pressing the hand that tendered her the sum demanded. 'How thoroughly have I brought myself to understand your charming character? There are thousands of people, my dearest Miss Ridley, capable perhaps of admiring, and almost, it may be, of loving you as much as I do, who yet would fail in appreciating the delicate, high-toned liberality of spirit which I so perfectly well know how to value, and which, believe me, I shall ever most fondly cherish. There is a sort of freemasonry in liberality, charming Constance, which renders it a virtue, to be properly esteemed only by those who share it. Is it not so, dear love? Do I make myself understood?'

'O yes, ma'am, quite so,' returned Constance, who, though exceedingly delighted at paying for the post-horses, and feeling a most valuable accession to her enjoyment from the independence produced by Mrs. Hartley's mode of receiving her, began to tire a little of these applications to her understanding which seemed destined to follow every application to her purse. The two purses having returned to their respective receptacles, however, she easily made her escape from whatever peroration was intended to follow, and, once more seated opposite Penelope in the barouch, speedily forgot all annoyances in the renewed delight of looking about her, asking questions, and listening to the answers of her especial friend. The conversation *en route* was indeed chiefly carried on between Penelope and Constance, Mrs. Hartley being occupied by a set of ivory tablets, on which she inscribed a variety of memoranda which appeared perpetually occurring to her: Caroline being for the most part asleep, and Margaret engaged by a novel which seemed wholly to engross her attention.

Having started from Bath, like experienced travellers at a very early hour on the following day, they reached London before six in the evening. Dressing and dinner followed without delay; but no sooner had the five ladies seated themselves in the drawing-room before their cups, than Mrs. Hartley said,

'Make haste, my dear girls, and get rid of your coffee-cups as soon as you can, for the next hour or two may be much better employed than in idle gossiping over their fragrant steam, refreshing though it be.'

And suiting the action to the word, she placed her own cup empty upon the tray, and got up and rang the bell.

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'Tell Bridges to bring my travelling writing-desk, Richard, and inquire below for whatever cards and notes may have been left. Have you done with your cup, Penelope? There! Now you may take the tray, Richard, and bring what I have ordered as quickly as possible.'

These commands were promptly obeyed, and in a few minutes Mrs. Hartley had the satisfaction of finding herself surrounded by a multitude of cards and notes, and her ever-ready portable writing-desk opened in the midst of them.

'That is well,' she said, settling herself before it, 'and just as it ought to be. Now we really look as if we were met for the dispatch of business—do we not? Sit here, Margaret, just at my right hand, will you? —you know I often call you my right hand: —sit down, dear, and note down names and addresses.'

Mrs. Hartley, who, as Constance whispered to Penelope, actually looked inspired, then set about reading the names and addresses of a multitude of dear friends. Those who had not changed their residence since the year before were thrown aside, but the cards of those who had, as well as names of some who aspired to the happiness of Mrs. Hartley's acquaintance, were placed before Margaret, who very methodically inscribed them on a sheet of foolscap placed before her for the purpose.

'What a number of new people!' exclaimed Penelope, who, though she might, perhaps, have found an occupation she liked better, had drawn her chair to the loo-table like the rest of the party, for it was quite evident that Constance was occupied most agreeably by the business that was going on.

'Yes; more new people than usual, I think. Of course I know them all, but there are many who have never figured on my list before.'

'But how in the world have they found you out, mamma, in a ready-furnished house?' demanded Caroline.

'I do request, Caroline, that if you intend to pique yourself upon the *naiveté* and vivacity of your character, you will find some other way of doing it than by proclaiming aloud to all the world that I live in a ready-furnished house. I am sure it is hardly going beyond the truth to say I have bought it, considering the immense price I pay for it; and it is so veryparticularly absurd too, after my having, as I may say, bribed Bates, by a thousand little obliging attentions and civilities, to get me the same house as last year, on purpose to give the appearance of its being my own. *Pray*, dear, let me never hear you say that again—*c'est trop bête*.'

'Of course I would not have said it to anybody but you, mamma,' replied Caroline, meekly, and much too well aware of the justice of her mother's remark to resent it. 'But do you think its being the same house can be the reason why everybody has known where to find you?'

'The cards I have sent round have given the information to my own established set; and as for the rest—let us see what the "Morning Post" has done for us. That is the paper, is it not, Margaret, lying under Penelope's gloves and handkerchief? What a quidnunc you are, Pen! It is really a blessing that your sublime indifference to the silly pursuits of your fellow-creatures does not extend to their records. I know no one who seizes upon a newspaper more eagerly than you do. Are we there, my dear? Have you found the paragraph?'

'No, mamma, I have not,' replied Miss Hartley, colouring.

'It is most abominable if they have omitted it,' rejoined her mother, as she took the paper, drew a brightly blazing lamp towards her, and began to examine that well-known portion of the sibylline leaf in which such matters as she sought for were likely to be found.

'How could you say, Penelope, that it was not here?' said Mrs. Hartley, after casting her eyes for half a moment over the paper.

'Here it is, and very obligingly put in the most conspicuous place possible. Shall I read it to you?'

This question was more addressed to Constance than to any one else, and she answered eagerly, 'O, thank you, Mrs. Hartley! pray do; I long to hear it;' when Mrs. Hartley read as follows:—

'"Arrived. At their residence in Bruton Street, Mrs. and the Misses Hartley and suite, from the family seat of Laurel Hill in the north of Devon. It is understood that this accomplished lady intends giving a series of weekly *soirées* in a style of peculiar elegance, in compliment to her guest, the beautiful and richly endowed orphan daughter of our late gallant admiral, Sir James Ridley. This young lady is, we understand, sister to the present baronet, and is about to make her *début* under the auspices of Mrs. H." There, dearest Miss Ridley!—I trust there is nothing in this to offend your rustic modesty, though I flatter myself it will suffice to account for all the invitations we were talking about.'

The cheeks of Constance tingled, and she was about to utter an exclamation, expressive of the dismay she felt at this publicity, when the tranquil manner in which Mrs. Hartley laid the paper aside, as containing nothing in the least degree out of the common way, together with the reflection that, whether common or uncommon, it was now too late to prevent it, stopped her, and relieving herself by taking a long breath, as a person might do who had conquered one rather steep and difficult point in a journey through a new and unknown land, she resigned herself to the expedient which appeared to her so much more profitable than agreeable, and again directed all her attention to her accomplished chaperon, noting all she said and did with equal interest and curiosity.

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'Lady Dort! I am delighted—very much delighted, indeed, dear Constance, at finding this card,' said Mrs. Hartley, taking one from the heap which lay before her, and placing it before Margaret to be inserted in the list. 'From one provoking accident or another, I have been prevented, year after year, from visiting Lady Dort. And now, you see, she has taken heart of grace, and determined to do the thing at once.'

'I suppose, by your satisfaction, my dear Mrs. Hartley, that she is something very distinguished, or very charming, or both?' said Constance, interrogatively.

'Distinguished? Yes, my dear, beyond all doubt she is distinguished, having made herself one of the most remarkable people one could meet, for many years past. But as to her being charming, I believe that is rather more apocryphal. She is, perhaps, the very plainest woman you ever saw; I should say ugly, only I have been assured that it is impossible to pronounce that tremendous word, without so strongly affecting the imagination of all hearers, as to make them fancy they see before them the image thus conjured up. She is plain, then; O! plain beyond all power of description or belief! But she has contrived to obtain the reputation—not of being clever—I do not believe that any one of her set really thinks her so, but of being so closely mixed up with all who are noted for being so, that she is, as it were, to all intents and purposes one of them—and then she receives on a large scale, which the majority of them do not. For if, according to the proverb,

"Learning is better far than house or land."

it by no means follows, you know, but rather the contrary, that it is a possession at all of the same kind; and it is therefore, I presume, that, generally speaking, the wits and geniuses of the age are more received than receiving. Not so, however, with Lady Dort. That she is seen everywhere is certain, but she is seen at home also; and in proportion as this is rare, it is valuable.'

'But surely she must have some qualities of mind of a higher order than is usual among mere ordinary mortals, or she could not thus be decidedly classed among the celebrities of the day,' said Constance, kindling at finding herself at once approaching to that goal of all her wishes, a personal intercourse with the literary world. 'I have often heard of Lady Dort, even in our remote land of clouted cream and apple orchards, as one known to fame in the only way which, in my opinion, is worth the wishing for—I mean, as a person superiorly intellectual.'

'Yes, my dear, you are quite right; Lady Dort not only belongs to the class, but ranks highly in it. For myself, I will not venture to sit in judgment on her pretensions, for on that subject I would greatly rather follow than lead. But I remember hearing a clever friend of mine say, in speaking of Lady Dort's literary reputation, and of the place she holds among the pre-eminently intellectual portion of the fashionable world, that her advantages in that line reminded her of the gardens of Babylon, which flourished on the house-top, and were bright and beautiful to behold, but that all that was needed for the culture of those valued treasures was brought up with labour, cost, and pain, for that nothing sprang indigenously there.'

'Capital!' exclaimed Constance. 'I see her, I know her! yet I quite comprehend how such a one may be invaluable as a wit-fancier, if not herself a wit. Heaven grant I may be included in her invitations!'

'Your prayer was heard before it was spoken, my dear Miss Ridley,' said Mrs. Hartley, pushing a card towards her, on which she read, with unspeakable pleasure, but astonishment very little lessened by her recent acquaintance with the 'Morning Post,' her own name inscribed on a card, announcing the interesting fact, that Lady Dort would be at home on Monday, the seventh instant, and on the following Mondays throughout the season. 'However rustically shy I may feel about the means, Mrs. Hartley, I cannot but congratulate myself upon the end,' said Constance, joyfully. But I really can hardly believe my own eyes. It does seem so very strange to find myself creeping out one day from Appleby Hut, without being acquainted, as far as I know and believe, with a single inhabitant of this great town, and the next invited, not to one, but a dozen of the most delightful parties in it!'

'Depend upon it you will have abundance of the same sort of surprising adventures. I only hope that the pleasure will not wear off with the novelty. Happily, however, here are more "at homes" for you, my dear, already; so you may go to sleep to-night with a variety of new delights in your head.'

'I shall indeed!' cried the *un-blazée* Constance, receiving the cards again offered to her, with the liveliest pleasure, and a very strong feeling of gratitude to Mrs. Hartley, to those who had issued the said cards, to the 'Morning Post,' to her friend Penelope, and to everybody else, who had by possibility anything to do with the blessed chance which placed her where she was, and with such glorious prospects before her.

CHATELAR TO MARY QUEEN OF SCOTTS.

BY MRS. CRAWFORD.

When nightly my wild harp I bring,
To wake all its music for thee,
So sweet looks thy face, as I sing,
To reason no longer I'm free.

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I forget thou art queen of the land,—
'Tis woman alone that I see;
And thrilling at touch of thine hand,
All else is forgotten by me.

Thy spell is upon me in sleep,—
In that bright dreamy world thou art mine
I waken,—but oh! tis to weep,
And the hopes of my slumber resign.
Oh! hadst thou been less than thou art,
Or I more deserving of thee,
I might have been lord of that heart—
Thou might'st have been all things to me.

When, Mary, thy bard is at rest,
His wild harp unstrung in the bower,
And others, like him, but more blest,
Shall sing to beguile thy lone hour;
O! think of the days of langsyne,
When Holyrood echoed my strain,
And thy voice sweetly mingled with mine,
As it never can mingle again.

ITALY.*

BY AN EXILE.

SECOND PERIOD. ITALIAN REPUBLICS.

§ IV. Decline and Fall of Italian Liberty.

Genoa—Andrea Doria—Last downfall of Florence—Savonarola—Machiavello—Francesco—Ferruccio—Crowning of Charles V.—Conclusion.

The reverses of the wars of the Bosphorus (1352—1354) and of Chiozza, (1378—1379,) by which Genoa was ultimately compelled to give up the empire of the eastern seas to her ancient foe, and the endless anarchy of her fiery nobility, had induced the Genoese people to implore the protection of the house of Visconti. After the death of John Visconti, Archbishop of Milan, (1356,) Genoa had thrown off the yoke and asserted her independence. The rout of Chiozza, however, (1381,) and the sanguinary feuds of two emulous families, the Fregosi and Adorni, (1382—1396,) soon made the Genoese feel the necessity of a foreign arbiter and pacificator. They offered the supreme dominion of their city to Charles VI. of France, hoping that the rule of a distant and feeble monarch would bring them to order and peace without encroaching upon their popular liberties. (1396.) Gian Galeazzo Visconti, who towards the year 1400 had succeeded in extending his sway over all Lombardy, recovered the rights of his family over Genoa, and the city continued to receive its first magistrates from his sons, Gian Maria and Filippo Maria, without, however, allowing their liege sovereigns to interfere in their internal or external policy. The republic of Genoa espoused the cause of the house of Anjou against Alphonso the Magnanimous, and humbled the pride of its ancient rivals, the Catalonians and Arragonese, in a naval conflict at Ponza, where Alphonso himself was taken prisoner, and conveyed in triumph to Genoa and Milan. (1439.) Filippo Maria Visconti, moved either by an unwonted feeling of generosity, or by political views, set the captive monarch, unransomed, at liberty. The Genoese, who very justly considered Alphonso as their own prisoner, indignant at this arbitrary act, rose in rebellion, and refused their allegiance to a sovereign who had no power to enforce it. But Genoa was neither yet thoroughly schooled to servitude, nor fit for a peaceful enjoyment of freedom. The people could find no rest from the ravages of contending parties, but by recurring to a remedy worse than the worst of evils,—foreign interference.

They again placed their republic under the protection of the French crown in 1458, and were governed by the princes of the house of Anjou, until wearied with their yoke, in 1461, they revolted against their self-imposed rulers, and destroyed a French army that was sent to recall them to obedience.

Three years later they renounced their high-purchased independence, captivated by the fame of the valour and magnanimity of Francesco Sforza, and voluntarily returned to their allegiance to Milan. (1464.) The revolting brutality of his son, Galeazzo, soon gave them reason to repent their hasty submission. A conspiracy was entered into by many of the Genoese patricians, (1476), directed by Giroloma Gentile, whose object it was to rouse the populace to massacre the Milanese authorities. The attempt proved unsuccessful, and many of the conspirators were immolated to the tyrant's revenge. But Galeazzo Sforza fell at last under the daggers of his assassins, (1478,) and Genoa was not slow in providing for its emancipation.

At the epoch of the descent of Charles VIII. (1494) and Louis XII. (1499,) Genoa followed the fortunes of Ludovic the Moor, and was involved in that usurper's fall. The French lieutenants of Louis XII., unable to appreciate the importance of popular rights, did not hesitate to trample down those municipal institutions which the Milanese despots had always respected. Genoa was subjected to a military rule, and harassed by the most violent extortions, until the exasperated population rose into an unanimous revolt, and drove out the French, (1507.) Louis XII. was obliged to march his whole army against the refractory city, and delivered it up to the most appalling military execution.

Since that time, the republic of Genoa, willing or unwilling, followed the fortunes of France. It suffered severely during the frequent reverses of the French armies in Italy.

* Conclusion from vol. x. p. 282.

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It was ravaged for many days with incredible fury by the Spaniards, who took it by surprise in 1522. The Genoese navy, commanded by Andrea Doria, was the best support of the French power at sea. Filippino Doria, his nephew, obtained, in the name of France, a signal victory over the imperial forces, in the Gulph of Salerno, (1528,) whilst the French armies were giving way before a continuation of every calamity on shore.

While these Genoese heroes were lavishing their blood for the service of France, the rule of that government weighed harder and harder on their unfortunate country. Andrea Doria demanded no other reward for his services than the restoration of his native republic. His just claims were disregarded by France. He passed over to Austria. He led his victorious galleys to Genoa; his presence alone was sufficient to rouse his countrymen to revolt. He proclaimed the independence of the republic in the name of Charles V. In the name of that emperor, whose fatal prosperity had given the death-blow to all that remained of Italian freedom, Doria asserted the restored liberty of Genoa, (1529.)

With a blind partiality for the proud city on which all his patriotic feelings were concentred, the Genoese admiral followed, with a rare fidelity, the standards of the destroyer of Italy. During his long contest against Francis I., and his expeditions to Algiers and Tunis, Doria was the right arm of Charles V. For his co-operation against France, Rome, Venice, and Turkey; for his steady compliance with all the measures that matured the fate of Italy, he only asked the faculty of disposing, at his pleasure, of what he considered to be his country. Genoa was indisputably his; had his ambition wanted the absolute sovereignty of that state, he was sure of the approbation and support of his master, and of the ready acquiescence of his countrymen. He preferred to restore to Genoa its republican franchises. He re-organized the state under the form of a temperate aristocracy, under that government which appeared to him, and which was, perhaps, in that age and country, the most secure and plausible. Towards the close of his career, Doria, 'the Genoese Washington,' retired from public life, and resumed the habits of a private citizen. Genoa enjoyed a long and profound peace, of which the conspiracy of Fiesco (1547) had scarcely power to ruffle the surface.

But the commerce of Genoa had long since suffered the severest losses. What had been left to the Genoese of their possessions in the Levant by their Venetian and Catalonian rivals, was utterly destroyed by the Turks. Their colonies at Pera and Caffa were put to the sword by Mahomet II. and his successors, (1453—1475); and even their last possession of Corsica began to be warmly disputed, by the frequent insurrections of those fierce islanders, led by the high-minded Sampiero.

Since the expulsion of the sons of Lorenzo de Medici at the epoch of the invasion of Charles VIII., Florence was distracted by religious and political factions.

Chance had sent to that city a Dominican monk of Ferrara, that Girolomo Savonarola, lawgiver and reformer, about whom, whether he was a self-deceiving enthusiast or a designing impostor, the world will not soon agree. (1489.) Previous to the death of Lorenzo de Medici, (some pretend under his auspices,) he had commenced his eccentric mission, and had stood unrelenting at the deathbed of that accomplished 'Florentine Pericles' who, in the misgivings of his last hour, sued in vain for the haughty friar's benediction. (1492.) As soon as Florence had rid herself of Piero de Medici and his brothers, the party of Savonarola obtained a wide ascendency over the multitude; and proclaiming Jesus Christ King of Florence, established a theo-democratic government, before which the semi-pagan, libertine association of courtiers, poets, and scholars, that used to crowd the halls of the house of Medici, were forced to bend in humiliation and terror. The fanatical pulpit demagogue, who had been by many writers called the precursor of Luther, availing himself of the general anxiety created in Italy by the descent of the French—an event which he took upon himself the merit of having predicted—preached and enforced a universal reform. A reaction in favour of the exiled family, attempted by some of their favourers in 1497, was punished with death. The easy, and not unfrequently profligate life of many of the young aristocracy was visited with the severest censure. A bonfire was made in the public square of what were called profane books and paintings, with irreparable detriment to letters and arts. Finally, Savonarola directed his attacks against the source itself of all corruption—the court of Rome. Pope Alexander VI., seeing the inefficiency of spiritual weapons, set against him the Augustinians, an order of monks inimical to the Dominicans. The champions of the two orders had a long war of words from their pulpits. Their partisans lighted a pile in the square of Florence, to test the veracity of their tenets and the firmness of their courage. The unsatisfactory result of that tremendous ordeal proved fatal to the credit of Savonarola; he was given up by his adherents and consigned to the flames. (1498.)

The republic was organized under a milder and wiser rule by the Gonfaloniere Piero Soderini, soon after the death of the Dominican friar. It was about this epoch that the counsels of the republic began to feel the influence of the sound and mighty intellect of Machiavello. This modest, virtuous, and moderate citizen, contented with humble and subordinate offices in a republic where his illustrious ancestors had repeated-

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ly filled the highest dignities, unreluctantly allowed his superiors to avail themselves of his rare talents, and yielded to them the merit of the measures he had alone the ability to suggest. He was the first in Italy to feel the imprudence of committing the safety of the state to the defence of mercenary adventurers, and to recommend the institution of a national militia, which, no doubt, powerfully contributed to retard, and might, perhaps, have utterly averted, the last downfall of Florence, had it been fully and opportunely adopted.

His frequent embassies to the courts of Rome and France, and his long mission to Cæsar Borgia, gave him that frightful insight of human nature, and of those detestable arts of policy, of which he has been but too generally believed to be the discoverer and promoter in Europe. Machiavello, however, invented nothing; with a mind perfectly dead to all enthusiasm, he took a calm, cold, and rather misanthropic survey of the human family, and described it as he saw it, with a placid though appalling fidelity—with an impartial though disheartening neutrality. There was in Italy, in that age, among the cultivated classes, little political, and no religious belief. The perpetual vicissitudes of factions had taught the greatest number of men to blend their personal interests with their warmest patriotic feelings. Machiavello, gifted with an essentially active mind, sought in public life rather employment than either power or fame, or much less honours and wealth. He was one of the most disinterested men that ever lived; and if he never perhaps loved any living being, neither did he certainly love himself, nor did he ever turn those powers for which he had been so much praised and abused, to raise himself in the world. His delight was in sounding the depths of the human heart. He wished to appreciate men after their positive value; and from this dangerous knowledge he derived nothing for himself, but the melancholy advantage of being entitled to despise both the oppressor and the oppressed—the prince and his subjects. He was as good as man can be without love or belief. Certainly, never were two epochs more diametrically opposed to each other than the age of Savonarola with the age of Machiavello, and yet this last made his entrance on the political stage just as the other made his dolorous exit.

The efforts of the Florentine republic, ever since it was delivered from the Medici, were pertinaciously turned to the conquest of Pisa, which had availed herself of the patronage of Charles VIII. to vindicate her independence. From 1499 to 1509, the Florentines carried on their unnatural hostilities. Every year, with a refined inveteracy, they laid waste the Pisan territory, with a view to reduce the town by famine. The French and Spaniards, who, profited by that brotherly enmity, by turns offered their alliance and sent men and subsidies to the besieged. Finally, Florence by the most tempting offers, purchased from France the right of enslaving the emulous city. A new emigration and rapid depopulation ensued. Pisa sank under this last calamity, to rise no more.

Meanwhile Florence, scarcely less exhausted, awaited her just retribution. Their constant alliance with France had incensed the wrath of the irascible Julius II., who, after the battle of Ravenna, resolved to punish the Florentines by restoring the Medici into their city.

Of the three sons of Lorenzo de Medici, Piero, the eldest, had died in 1503, at the epoch of the disastrous retreat of the French at the Garigliano. Giovanni, the cardinal, (afterwards Leo X.) and Julian Duke of Nemours, the two surviving brothers, marched as the rear-guard of a disorderly band of Spanish marauders that Julius sent to the conquest of their country. On their first arrival they surprised and took Prato, and gave it up to the ravages of an unruly soldiery. The terror that the massacre of Prato struck among the defenders of Florence induced them to capitulate, and the Medici were reinstalled in their native city after eighteen years of exile. (1512.)

The ancient adversaries of the family of Medici rallied. They entered into a conspiracy, which was soon detected, and which cost some of the most distinguished citizens their life. Machiavello was apprehended among the number, and put to the torture. He stood his ordeal with his wonted calmness and constancy. No confession could be extorted from him, and perhaps he had nothing to confess; perhaps his guilt, as well as that of his accomplices, had no better foundation than the famous Catholic plot in the days of Charles II., in England. Leo X., at his accession, (1513,) proclaimed a general amnesty, and gave orders for the release of his prisoners. After the exaltation of Leo, Julian, his youngest brother, ruled as his lieutenant at Florence till the year 1516. After the death of Julian, the pope placed at the head of the republic Lorenzo, Duke of Urbino, son of his eldest brother, Piero. Lorenzo having also died, (1519,) Florence was governed by the cardinal Giulio de Medici, a natural son of that Julian who perished in the Pazzi conspiracy. Cardinal Giulio was afterwards exalted to the papal chair, (1523,) under the name of Clement VII.

This weak, crafty, and unprincipled pontiff, who, by his alliance with the French, had called upon himself the resentment of Charles V., and exposed the metropolis of Christendom to the awful ravages of the lawless followers of the constable of Bourbon, (1527,) now, taking advantage of the peace of Cambray, which laid the whole country at the mercy of the Austrian conqueror, and providing for his own safety by the treaty of Barcelona, gave up the French, his former allies—gave up the power, splendour, and dignity of the church—gave up the general

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interests of Italy—to reconcile the good will of the minion of fortune. At the moment of conferring upon Charles V., at Bologna, the golden crown of the Roman empire, and the iron crown of the Lombards, (1530,) Clement asked no favour in return but the conqueror's co-operation in bringing his native town to obedience.

The tidings of the storming of Rome by Bourbon's army had no sooner reached Florence, than the lovers of liberty had, without resistance, driven the lieutenants of Clement from their towns, and established their popular government. The antique virtues of republican Tuscany seemed at once revived for a final experiment. At the first dawning of this ephemeral liberty, the most active and influential citizens returned from the land of exile, or from their inglorious retreats. Machiavello, who, under the Medici, had been condemned to neglect and inaction, though he evinced no repugnance to offer his services to his country, whatever might be the ruling faction, opened now his heart to a hope that his talents might be of some avail to the republic. But public feeling was against him; he was thought a lukewarm friend of the cause of his country, and looked upon with mistrust. His upright mind sank under this undeserved disgrace, and he was brought by chagrin to an immature end. The warmest defenders of Florence, too late made aware of their injustice, gathered round him. From a bed of sickness, the dying statesman and citizen, too great to give way to any feeling of personal resentment, raised his voice for his country, and his last words were of applause and encouragement to its restorers.

Machiavello recommended, above all measures, the reorganization of the national militia, and exhorted his friends to proceed with concord and firmness.

The Florentines were firm and unanimous. Never had that city displayed so much zeal or disinterested patriotism, never brought forward such inexhaustible resources. The citizens were mustered up in several bands of hardy infantry, which rivalled each other in activity and vigilance. Men of letters, artists, and scholars, left their peaceful avocations, to range themselves under the standard of the republic. The gigantic mind of the greatest of ancient and modern artists, Michael Angelo, lent his powerful aid to the erection of bulwarks and batteries for the protection of his native walls. He was charged with repeated missions to Ferrara, to study new models of fortification, and was even made one of the ten leaders of the military forces. There was a moment, it is said, when, in a fit of spite or despondency, (we will never say of fear,) he deserted his post, and took refuge at Ferrara and Venice. But this was long before the hour of danger pressed hard upon Florence. Ere the Papal and imperial allies had laid siege to his native town, he sued for a reconciliation with the magistrates, and hastened back to take his share in the forthcoming events.

And now the Spanish and German bands invaded the vale of Arno, and laid waste the beautiful plain of Ripoli, pitching their tents under the walls of Florence;—against the numberless hosts of her besiegers Florence had no friend in or out of Italy. Resistance under such circumstances was almost insanity, and yet Florence resisted. Francesco Ferrucio, one of the leaders of the militia, a man of superior intelligence and rare intrepidity, still kept the field in the open country, and, with undisciplined bands, performed such prodigies of valour as could hardly be expected from the best experienced veterans. He fell in at length with a large body of German cavalry at Gavignana, and, compelled to give battle under disadvantageous circumstances, he was cut to pieces, with nearly the whole of his band.

Meanwhile, within the walls, famine, plague, and treason hastened the fatal day of Florence. A sullen determination, such as despair alone is apt to engender, had seized the rulers of the beleaguered city; they resolved never to yield to any extremity, and to bury themselves with their families under the ruins of their country. Malatesta Baglioni, one of the mercenary leaders which the republic held in its pay, understood nothing of that heroic resolution, and entered into secret negotiations with the besiegers, to avert the fate of those deluded enthusiasts, and save them in spite of themselves. He opened the gates to the enemy, and turned his artillery against the town. Florence surrendered after a siege of ten months, (August 10th, 1530.)

The vengeance of Clement weighed hard and mercilessly upon the conquered. All Italy and Europe were filled with the clamours of thousands of Florentine exiles. Alexander de Medici, a bastard of that family for whom the pope obtained from Charles V. the title of Doge of Florence, was allowed to exercise, for six years, the most revolting tyranny.

After the death of Alexander, who fell a victim to a domestic tragedy, Cosmo, a descendant of Lorenzo, brother of the first Cosmo Padre della Patria, was raised to the throne by the intrigues of the friends of his family, among whom the most ardent and active was the historian Guicciardini. Another and the last effort in favour of the liberty of Florence, was made by a large number of exiles, led by the representatives of the noble families of Salviatti, Strozzi, and other inveterate enemies of the name of Medici. But they were routed at Montemurlo, (1538,) and their leaders lost their lives on the scaffold. Filippo Strozzi, the principal hero of that ill-fated expedition, destroyed himself in his dungeon. With the aid of a French army, Cosmo succeeded in adding Sienna to his dominions, (1534,) and a few years later he was decorated by Pius V. with the title of Grand Duke of Tuscany, (1569.) Lucca alone, of all the Tuscan republics, was suffered to continue under its narrow-minded and pusillanimous aristo-

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cracy, and lived in utter insignificance and obscurity down to the last catastrophe, which involved its fate in that of Venice and Genoa. During the long reign of Charles V. the usurpations of all the Italian princes received their sanction from the imperial authority. At the epoch of his coronation at Bologna, Charles V. invested Alphonso of Este with the duchies of Modena and Reggio, which he was to hold as fiefs of the empire. On the same occasion Alphonso received also from the pope's hands the sovereignty of Ferrara, the ancient seat of his family, the possession of which had been so warmly disputed against him, especially by Julius II., who was bent on the utter extermination of his house. The Duke of Savoy and the Marquis of Montferrat, who from their mountainous districts had extended their sway over the best part of the Piedmontese territory, and had taken an active part in the wars of Italy as the constant allies of France, now sued for the patronage of Austria, and made their obeisance at Bologna. The marquisate of Mantua was likewise erected into a duchy, and restored to its ancient possessors, the Gonzagas. But the lustre of that family, as well as of that of Montserrat, was soon destined to fade. These principalities were left vacant in consequence of the extinction of the legitimate line, and soon became the subject of fresh contentions, that replunged Italy into those evils from which it had begun to recover.

Meanwhile, the loss of liberty and independence paralyzed the active and enterprising spirit that had until that day characterized the citizens of republican Italy. All the industry and ingenuity of the Lombard manufacturers were brought to an end by the cruelty and fanaticism, by that strange mixture of oppression and anarchy, that characterized the epoch of the Spanish dominion. The Milanese manufacturers emigrated by thousands to the neighbouring cantons of Switzerland, and the soil itself of the richest plain in Europe lay, for two centuries, uncultivated and sterile.

The buoyant and cheerful disposition of the Florentine merchants, underwent a gradual process of enervation and degeneracy under the cruel but crafty rule of the youngest branch of the Medici. The wealth and population of Florence decreased with a frightful rapidity, and Pisa, deprived of her port by the rivalry of Leghorn, did not even preserve the shade of its former importance. The lowlands of Tuscany, as well as of the Roman campagna and the Neapolitan coasts of the Adriatic, were turned into unhealthy swamps. Ravenna, Brindisi, Barletta, and the best harbours in the south and east, were gradually filled up and deserted.

The evils of political proscription were followed by the ravages of religious persecution. The Spanish and Roman inquisition, notwithstanding the general resistance with which the Italians repeatedly rose against it, succeeded, at length, in silencing the voice of free opinion, and blasting the vital growth of science and literature.

Poetry, painting, and even music, seemed gradually to obey the influence of that general depression and languor. During the whole of the sixteenth, and a great part of the following century, from the age of Michael Angelo and Leonardo da Vinci to the close of Salvator Rosa's eccentric career, the fine arts underwent an imperceptible and yet irresistible decline.

Activity and brilliancy of mind, loftiness and magnanimity of soul, were still to be found in Italy; but what had formerly appeared to be the birthright inheritance common to the whole of that gifted nation, became the rare and accidental privilege of individuals.

The Venetians and the Genoese alone, as a people, continued to give frequent and luminous proofs of a robust and tenacious vitality. What was in Florence and Ferrara the result of ambitious and luxurious princes, was at Genoa and Venice effected by the unanimous exertion of popular energy. It took no less than two centuries to wrench from the privateers of those two maritime cities the sceptre of the seas, or to force their merchantmen to unlearn their way to the *Scales* of the Levant; nor could their final ruin have ever been accomplished without the important discoveries which gave the Atlantic so decided an ascendency over the Mediterranean. Of this great geographical revolution the Italians have an undisputed right to claim the first glory. It was principally the daring spirit of Italian exiles and adventurers that brought beyond the Alps and beyond the sea that state of fermentation and disquietude that allowed them no peace in their country. They blended their ardour for trade and commercial enterprise with that love of danger, with that adventurous, devotional, extravagant spirit, that had hitherto been the sole mover of chivalrous enthusiasm.

Columbus was the last of knights.

Catterino Zeno, Barbaro, and Contarini, during their long and perilous missions, wandered far and wide through the Asiatic continent over the track that their venerable countryman, Marco Polo, had trod two centuries before. Their glowing descriptions of the golden regions of the east awakened the ambition and avarice of the European courts. Portuguese navigators especially, guided by a noble Venetian, Luigi Cadamosto, the first who published a report of those wonderful cruises, had already launched forth on their southern expeditions, when at last the Genoese hero laid open a much wider field of discovery by piloting four humble Spanish caravels to the new hemisphere. Soon the eagerness of nautical enterprise found the limits of the globe too narrow for its daring aspirations. The mariners of Venice and Genoa flocked to the ports of Palos, of Cadiz, and Lisbon, whence it seemed as if the most obscure pilot had only to steer westward, or southward, where new stars would welcome his arrival, and the ocean would start up before him new islands and continents on which to cast his

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name, sure that his name would remain as long as those new islands and continents should tower over the main.

Of the numberless advantages that Europe was to derive from these maritime discoveries, Italy had only the glory. It was not, perhaps, without providential interposition that Columbus could not prevail on his native state to enter into his views. It was a tacit mark of acquiescence in the will of Heaven, by which Italy seemed to feel that her maritime race was run, and that nothing was left to her but to lead the way to the future greatness of her more fortunate neighbours.

The names of Columbus, Cadamosto, Amerigo, Verrazzano, John and Sebastian Cabot, stood unrivalled among those of the earliest European navigators. Spain, France, England, and Portugal, shared the rich spoils that the ocean had yielded to their genius and daring. Of the vast continent of the new world not an acre of ground fell to the lot of the Italians, not a lump of the ore of its inexhaustible mines—ay, thank God! not a drop of the blood of its inoffensive inhabitants.

THE SONG OF THE SEA.

A GLANCE—a glance,—of the dark blue sea!
All gay with its snowy chivalry;
Rushing so bravely, and gleaming so bright,
With its coursers of foam, and its riders of light;—
As side by side,
They prance in their pride,
Or bound away in their tameless glee,
The seagod's steed!—the steed for the free!

A scent—a scent,—of the summer sea!
The scent of the leaf of the ocean tree—
Which the sea-nymphs press with their fingers fair,
As they weave a green wreath of Leucothoe's hair.
Pure, pale, and bright
Is the crown they dight,
And soft as the sea-shell's pearly sheen,
That tints the cheek of the ocean-queen.

A sound—a sound,—of the glorious sea!
Its myriads are up in their wild revelry;
Its armies rise to the battle shock,
As they burst in their might o'er cliff and o'er rock;
Whilst crag and steep
Go down in their sweep,
And the victors shout loud for their mastery;—
The ocean deep's victors!—the hosts of the sea!

A dirge—a dirge,—of the moonlight sea!
'Tis the home for the brave—'tis the home for the free!
Oh, gently they sink to its pillows deep,
In freshness, and brightness, and silence to sleep,
In the far down caves
Of the tideless waves.
Soft, soft may the rest of the weary ones be!
But thrice blest be their slumbers—the dead of the sea!

A chant—a chant, of the circling sea;
From the throne of the sea-kings,—the isle of the free;
As they launch the keel, and fling wide the sail:
And the bark proudly bounds on the wing of the gale;
While the ocean-stars break
In her fiery wake,
As high o'er the crest of the storm-wave she rides,
The ocean-god's daughter—the queen of the tides!

A song—a song,—to our native sea!
What of sunnier, fairer climes seek we!

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Though a brighter lamp in their heaven be hung—
Though a warmer beam on their earth be flung,
Though fruit, flower, and gem
Glow richer with them—
Still the land that is girt by the wide-rolling sea
Is the land that is dear to the bold and the free!— S.

RECOLLECTIONS EXCITED BY THE PERFUME OF DIFFERENT FLOWERS.

BY LADY CHATTERTON.*

A FRIEND has just sent me some beautiful plants, and their perfume awakens many vivid recollections of early youth. Nothing recalls so forcibly to my mind past scenes as the smell of flowers. I shall relate some of these remembrances, and let each of my sweet flowers tell a story of by-gone days.

WALL-FLOWER; OR FASCINATIONS OF THE SEA.

The first sweet perfume of spring—humble, cheerful wall-flower! Its fresh smell and gay look excite in my mind images of peace and happiness enjoyed by old age, after a life of suffering.

In one of the pleasant dells of ——shire, there stands a grey stone house of the Elizabethan period, but not in the grand style of that picturesque age.

It is a small but comfortable-looking abode, fitted for the dwelling of a hospitable family of moderate fortune. A grassy slope runs down from its southern front to the clear river; a wood of fine old trees protects it from the north, and covers the hill which rises behind.

There is no park; but the meadows on the opposite side of the stream are bordered with hedgerows of large oak and beech; and the village, with its venerable church, situated about a quarter of a mile to the right, forms a very pretty picture from the windows of the old house.

The gardens, and a broad terrace leading to them, have remained unchanged since the days of Queen Bess; probably the very same sort of flowers and fruits still flourish there, for though sweet and beautiful, and of the most luxuriant growth, they are what is now termed common. A row of dark red wall-flowers grow close down under the drawing-room windows, and the old deep porch is over-shadowed with sweet-brier and jessamine.

Like many places in that primitive country, it is inhabited by a descendant of the same family which first erected its time-stained walls. The arms and crest emblazoned on the painted glass window of the sunny dining-room, and carved over the porch, might have figured on the heavy coach which conveyed the family to church for many generations, and may still be seen on the unpretending chariot which now carries thither the last of its race.

She is an aged woman, and has known much sorrow; but the experiences of no common woe have left only an impression of earnest hope and expectation of joy to come, on her cheering countenance. It is a face which few can look on without feeling both happier and better than they were before.

There is nothing which cheers our course through the difficulties and evils of life so much as the contemplation of those characters, which, by the aid of true religion, have passed unscathed and unruffled into a green and cheerful old age. Such a one was Mrs. L——, or, as she was generally called by those who knew and loved her, Aunt Mary.

I never visited her peaceful abode without feeling in good humour with the world, and full of hope that, after 'fighting the good fight,' I should attain to peace and happiness, either in this world or the next. The first thing I remember to have heard her say (when I was quite a child) was a truly sublime and christian sentiment. When speaking of our hopes of another life, and what would constitute our bliss there, she said, 'Well, my idea of happiness is to see every one I know and love the best enjoying a superior degree of bliss, and that they may all be more honoured than myself. *I wish to be the last and least in heaven!*'

It was probably at L—— Hall that I first smelt the sweet perfume of wall-flower. My heart bounds when I meet with it, because it brings before me the image of dear Aunt Mary, sitting in her drawing-room, surrounded by ——. But I will not trust myself to describe that room, or I should never finish. She was not the only dweller in the old house; her niece, an elderly spinster, lived there also.

Sarah D—— was considerably younger than her aunt, but repining grief had given her an appearance of greater age. She had not attained that look of placid benevolence which imparted an almost youthful freshness and simplicity to the old lady's countenance. Yet Sarah D—— was very good; but who could live with such an aunt, and

* From Lady Chatterton's new work, now in the press, entitled 'Home Sketches and Foreign Recollections.'

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not become imbued with some of the wide-spreading sunshine of her mind?

'Well! what can you have to say about this common country place, and these two old women?—it sounds so very uninteresting.' So it does; and if you met my two heroines in the Park or Bond Street, they would pass unnoticed; yet their story is full of interest, though they probably resemble hundreds of elderly and antiquated-looking dames and old maids that abound in every quarter of this crowded island. And it may be, that in this common herd which we see every day, there are many just as good and as interesting as my old women—many who have suffered and struggled through temptations and woes—many, amongst those common-place, old-fashioned, perhaps ugly beings, whom, could we but read the secrets of their minds, and know the romance of their history, we should take to our heart, weep with kindly sympathy at their misfortunes, contemplate with admiration their grief-hallowed characters, and make them a model for our own.

Mrs. L—— had been beautiful, and was the sole heiress to the old place and estate where she now dwells. Like most beauties and inheritors of three thousand a-year, she had been loved and wooed by many ere she had attained the age of eighteen. The rich and the noble sought her hand, but she refused them all, and year after year passed without producing any change in her resolution. However, at the age of three-and-twenty, she married Edward L——, a poor sea captain, a distant cousin, who from earliest childhood had been dearer to her than any one in the world.

This early affection had grown up on both sides into the warmest love; yet the young man went to sea, and returned again and again, without ever breathing a word of his passion to the beautiful heiress. I never heard how it was settled at last, but I know that a happier pair never existed than Captain and Mrs. L——. Two years, in which short space a whole life of intense joy seemed concentrated, flitted away. The birth of a beautiful boy had rendered their joy complete, when the war broke out again, and Edward went to sea.

Mary prayed daily and hourly to her heavenly Father for his safety, as she had done years before when no one knew the secret of her heart. Time passed, and she taught her little boy to clasp its hands in adoration, and lisp the dear word 'father,'—but her husband did not return.

A battle had been fought, and his name came to her borne on the wings of fame. He had behaved so nobly, that, in the opinion of every one, he merited the highest reward.

Mary's heart beat high with hope and expectation; but weeks, and even months, passed, and brought no further intelligence.

After the battle he had never been heard of. For a long time great uncertainty hung over his fate, and his wife alternately hoped and despaired. Months passed on; and this lingering life of fear and expectation would have been utterly insupportable to a person of her intense feelings, had she not been a true christian. At last came the overwhelming certainty—he was dead.

'O that my child may never be a sailor!' was the widow's prayer, after the first paroxysm of intense grief was over. I have heard her say, that she suffered more from a vague fear and a strange sort of apprehension that he would wish to become a sailor, than from any real sorrow which ever befell her. She had lived through all the agonizing doubts and fears about her adored husband. God had given her strength to support every sorrow, and the widow shrank, as she afterwards said, with sinful apprehension from having the same to undergo again.

With trembling haste she removed every painting of a ship from her young child's gaze; even a fine model of her husband's vessel, which had hitherto stood in the hall, and his portrait, where he was represented in his naval uniform—these beloved objects which had cheered so many lonely hours—were now placed in an old wainscoted room, which she carefully locked, and kept the key herself.

Apprehension of evil often clouds the mind and bewilders reason more than positive misfortune:—

'Das Ferne. Künftige beängstigt,
Ihr fühlend herz: was unabänderlich
Und wirklich da ist, trägt sie mit ergebung.'

And so it was with Mrs. L——. She was not only strong-minded, but possessed good judgment; yet under the influence of this fear she acted unwisely. The child felt there was some mystery connected with the memory of his father; and though aware that he was dead, little Edward could never ascertain why he was not buried in the church among the beautiful old monuments of his relations.

Of all the feelings that act on childhood, none have so much power as mystery: the mind broods over anything mysterious; every strong feeling is excited by the endeavour to clear it up; and curiosity, pride, and impatience are brought into active play. 'Why should that room be locked up?' was a question little Edward continually asked, but not of his mother. His sensitive, yet somewhat proud nature, shrank from alluding to a subject which he saw she wished to avoid, and hence the concealment of his real thoughts added strength to the passionate curiosity he felt. Though artless by nature, this powerful feeling taught him to be artful.

Now, though Mrs. L—— concealed the portrait of her husband from the child, she was continually talking to him of his father. She loved to kindle in his young heart somewhat of the adoration she herself felt for her husband.

One day, when the widow and her son

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were going to spend the afternoon at a neighbour's house, little Edward feigned a slight illness, in order to be left at home without his mother. He anxiously waited for her departure; and as she drove from the door, and he saw the carriage disappear in a turn of the road, he clapped his hands with joy. He had seen a key in his mother's desk, which belonged, as he imagined, to the mysterious room; of this key he had contrived during the morning to get possession, and on his mother's departure off he ran to ascertain the point.

His heart beat with the intensity of his feelings, his hand trembled as he turned the key, and he entered the room with a soft and solemn step. A beautiful portrait was the first object which met his eager gaze, and the child felt that he looked upon the likeness of his father.

The widow had often minutely described the features of her husband; and when the boy now saw the picture, he burst into tears. Every part of the dress in which his beloved parent was drawn—the back-ground, too, where the sea and some ships of war were represented—became engraven on his mind. Underneath the picture was a large model of the poor captain's ship, and this interesting object long rivetted the child's attention. At last, fearful of being discovered, he reluctantly withdrew, locked the door, and carefully replaced the key.

And now, why had all this been concealed from him? was the first thought that suggested itself to his mind. Some days afterwards, when he was reading the history of Nelson, he looked at the print of that celebrated man, and taking it to his mother, asked why he was represented in that particular dress.

'That is a naval uniform,' said the widow.

The child mused deeply, but said nothing of what engrossed his thoughts; for he felt that if he inquired now about his father, his mother would suspect something. He waited patiently, or rather impatiently, (for he never slept that night,) till the very next day, and then asked as quietly as possible, though his heart beat violently, 'Was not my dear father a naval officer?'

'Why do you think so—why do you imagine he was?' inquired Mrs. L——, starting.

'Because—because I fancied—I—' stammered the boy with embarrassment. The mother felt it would be useless to deny any longer a fact which he must learn some day, and therefore replied that her dear husband had been a naval officer.

'Then I will be one too,' said little Edward, in a quiet tone, but with a look of firmness and determination far above his years. The widow turned deadly pale; then burying her face in her hands, burst into tears.

'Mother, dearest mother!' exclaimed the now weeping boy. 'What have I done?—oh forgive me for making you unhappy—I know I have done very wrong.'

'My child, my only darling, if it be the will of God, I must bow down with submission; but, oh! how ardently I have prayed to be spared this trial.' She then told him the manner of his father's death, and all the anxieties she had suffered for years, and her fears lest the only remaining joy she had on earth—her dear boy—should wish to become a sailor.

'I will not, then,' exclaimed Edward; 'no, I will never make you unhappy—I will never leave you—I will do everything you wish, and am determined not to go up and look at the beautiful sea from St. George's hill any more.'

There was a height at the back of the house, called St. George's hill, which I before said was covered with fine trees, on one of which (it was a gigantic oak) a sort of rude staircase, with a seat at the top, had been erected; and from this elevated spot the ocean could be seen in the far distance.

The widow had passed many an anxious hour there, from the time when her husband, quite a boy, had first gone to sea. There she had afterwards watched and prayed with her darling child in her arms, when expecting his return. But since she had learnt with certainty his sad fate, and that her apprehensions were roused lest the boy should inherit his father's passion for the sea, she had discontinued the practice, and had earnestly endeavoured to prevent her child from going to that place, and gazing thence on the fascinating element, upon the plea that she feared he would tumble down, as the old steps and seat were much decayed.

It was the only spot for miles round whence the sea was visible, and she had discovered with much sorrow that little Edward was very fond of going there; he had several times expressed the most enthusiastic admiration for the beautiful glittering thing, which he said, on some days, when the sun was shining upon it, looked like a number of soft blue eyes beckoning to him. Often had he implored his mother to take him near to that lovely ocean; but he now promised he would never again ask her to do so, and that he would believe all the horrors she had often told him about the dangerous element.

Soon after this occurrence, the widow adopted a little girl, the only child of her husband's sister. The mother had lately died, and the child was left to the care of a poor, yet extravagant and thoughtless father. Sarah B—— was a year younger than Edward, and very lovely. An attachment soon grew up between the two children, which the widow watched with delight, for it promised to be as strong and permanent as her own.

She began now to feel some hope that little Edward's love for his cousin would subdue his passion for the sea; and as Sarah was not an heiress, or he a pennyless younger son, there would not, when he grew up be that impediment to a declaration of his love which had so long sealed the lips of her own poor lover.

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On the other hand, Sarah's disposition and temper gave the widow some uneasiness and trouble. She was by nature passionate and proud; and had been much spoiled by a fond invalid mother and foolish father, before she came to L—— Hall. As she grew up, under the widow's watchful care, her disposition improved, and her love for Edward was so intense as finally to subdue any bad feeling which might have lurked in her heart.

The young people were never parted for a single day, till Edward went to college, and the grief they then experienced may be easily imagined. Sarah suffered so much from depression of spirits when he was gone, that Mrs. L—— began to fear her health would suffer in consequence.

They had hitherto lived very retired; but now that her children were growing up, Mrs. L—— thought it right to see more of her neighbours; and in order to divert the melancholy of Sarah, she encouraged her intimacy with the daughters of a neighbouring clergyman.

The Miss Eltons were lively, good-humoured girls, and Sarah soon became the companion of their walks and rides. Her sadness quickly vanished, but it was replaced by a look of less softness than usual, in which there was somewhat of pride which Mrs. L—— did not quite like to see. Neither her son nor Sarah had spoken of their union; but Mrs. L—— never felt any apprehension that it would not take place.

The summer vacation arrived, and Edward returned to his old home. His mother and Sarah were waiting in the porch to receive him. After he had clasped his delighted mother in his arms, he turned with ecstasy of joy to Sarah, but she drew back, with some coldness of manner, only giving him her hand, and saying in a quiet tone, 'I am very glad to see you, dear Edward.'

The words were affectionate enough; but there was something in their tone which made the warm-hearted lover tremble and turn deadly pale. Poor Edward! was this the moment he had looked forward to as the happiest of his life? Absence, with him, had only strengthened into adoration a feeling which had always been love. He had learnt the secret of his heart, and looked forward with rapture to the declaration of his enthusiastic feelings to Sarah.

And now a sudden weight depressed his spirits; the sunbeams which streamed through the old painted glass windows were bright as ever, but oh! how cold and dim did they appear to him; every thing was provokingly the same as when he left home, but the charm which gave a tinge of happiness to every object, was gone.

The mother's anxious eye saw, during dinner-time, there was something wrong; the conversation, formerly so joyously unrestrained, now lagged. Sarah said but little, and Mrs. L—— thought she discovered traces of tears in the dark-brown eyes, which were scarcely raised from the untasted food on her plate. When the meal was ended, Mrs. M—— wished to leave the young people alone, but Sarah followed her close; and it was only when Edward, with a countenance of the greatest anxiety, begged to have a few minutes' conversation with his cousin, that she was induced to remain.

The widow went into the drawing-room full of hope and fear; she was utterly perplexed at the conduct of Sarah, and those vague apprehensions of ill, which had long vanished from her mind, now returned with startling intensity.

Hours passed; the sun had sunk behind the old church steeple—but Edward and Sarah did not appear. 'This is a good sign,' thought Mrs. L——; yet still she trembled. The moon rose calm and clear from behind the tall trees, and she tried to imagine the bliss which the lovers must be enjoying; for she remembered the first moonlight walk with her own dear Edward after their love had been declared.

She would not stir from the drawing-room lest she should meet them, and disturb their blissful tête-à-tête. Ten o'clock struck; the tea had long been brought in; still the widow sat in the south window, gazing on the lovely scene without—thinking of past joys, and full of ardent hopes for her son's happiness.

Another hour passed, and she saw a dark form emerge from the grove and cross the broad terrace walk. It was like her son—but he was alone, so it could not be he; yet she trembled, and prayed more fervently for his happiness.

But it was now very late; and as they were accustomed to keep early hours, she began to feel some alarm. 'They may have imagined I should be gone to bed, and perhaps, therefore, did not come into the drawing-room,' thought the widow; and she went up stairs, resolving to see if her son was in his room.

The door was locked—she gently knocked at it; there was no answer. Again, and louder she tapped, when Edward opened it, and clasped her in his arms. 'I was afraid,' said the widow, 'that—that—oh! my son, you are not happy,' exclaimed the poor mother as she remarked the haggard looks of her son. 'Tell me, I beseech you, the truth. There has been some misunderstanding between you?'

'No, indeed, dearest mother; I am quite—quite happy; but am rather tired now, so leave me, and I will tell you everything in the morning.' He gently drew her towards the door, but with a look of firmness, and she left him with a sad and desponding heart.

She then went to Sarah's room, and contrary to her usual custom found the door locked. Not wishing to disturb the poor girl, who had looked very ill all day, and certainly had been suffering from some mysterious cause, the widow subdued her impatience to learn what had occurred, and went to bed.

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But sleep would not visit her eyelids. Sarah's room was next to hers, and several times she fancied she heard a stifled sob. O that morning would come! thought the widow; for she felt that these two beings who were dearest to her were suffering; but in vain she conjectured what could be the cause. Tired and weary from anxiety and fear, towards morning she sank into a deep sleep, and did not awake till long after her usual hour.

She started up on finding how late it was; and hastily dressing, went down into the breakfast-room. No one was there. She searched the other apartments without success, and then the garden, but found neither Sarah nor her son. 'They may have gone up to the old seat; it was their favourite spot,' thought the widow; and putting on her bonnet, she hurried up the hill.

Sarah was there—she was leaning over the seat, and gazing with a countenance of deep sorrow on the distant ocean. On hearing the widow's voice she came down and endeavoured to brush away the tears which dimmed her eyes.

'My child, my darling Sarah, what has happened? Speak, I implore you—do not leave me longer in this dreadful suspense. What have you done, and where is Edward?'

'Perhaps I have done wrong,' exclaimed Sarah, throwing herself into the widow's arms—'perhaps—yet no! I am poor, and do not deserve him, and I am sure you will be better pleased.'

'Surely you have not rejected his love?' said Mrs. L——; 'you must know that I—'

'I did it for the best,' exclaimed the sobbing girl; 'but I fear it has made him unhappy—and when I now think of his despair—oh, I was wrong, I was proud. Miss Eltons were always quizzing me about my rich lover, and so—'

'Oh, let us hasten to undeceive him. My poor Edward, when I remember his miserable countenance last night, I tremble with fear lest—'

'Lest what?' exclaimed Sarah, now much alarmed. 'Yes, let us hasten down and see him.'

But Edward could nowhere be found. A day of anxious suspense passed. Servants were despatched all around the country, but no tidings of him could be heard. Night came, and the poor mother and Sarah sat at the drawing-room window. Mrs. L—— told of all the fears that had harassed her mind the night before, and Sarah's sufferings grew to agony.

The next day passed without any intelligence, but the morning of the third brought a letter by the post. It was from Edward, dated from the ship Juno at Portsmouth. It contained expressions of the tenderest affection for his adored mother, and grief to think that he was making her unhappy by his present conduct. But he said that the last night, after Sarah had rejected his love, he went up to St. George's hill; as he gazed on the sea he felt utterly unable to resist the feeling which impelled him, now that his hopes of earthly joy were at an end, to indulge the object of his early and passionate wishes. To Sarah he sent a tender message—he fervently hoped she might be happy, and would daily implore God for blessings on her head.

In less than an hour after the receipt of this letter, the carriage was at the door to convey the anxious mother and Sarah to Portsmouth. They travelled with the utmost speed, but arrived too late. The Juno had sailed the night before for Corfu!

Letters were written. Sarah declared all the passionate love which had so long lain half concealed. She confessed that pride led her to act in a way opposed to every genuine feeling of her heart—as well as to the dictates of her better sense. She confessed her error, and implored Edward's forgiveness.

Edward received these delightful letters at Corfu, and his happiness was complete. He would serve the two years, and then return to receive the hand of his adored Sarah. So now happiness was, in a great measure, restored to three affectionate hearts, and the mother and Sarah talked with hope of the blissful day when Edward would return.

The two years had passed, and they received a joyful letter from Plymouth. Edward had bought a beautiful yacht, that he might enjoy his passion for the sea with those dear beings he loved most. He intended to sail round to Weymouth, which was only ten miles from L—— Hall. He would probably be there almost as soon as they had received the letter. So they immediately ordered the carriage and drove to Weymouth. It was a bright but windy day in October when Mrs. L—— and Sarah dismounted from the carriage, and stood on a height which commanded a view of the harbour.

The blue sea sparkled brightly in the sunshine, but the foaming waves dashed up against the rocky coast and heights of Portland Island with a loud roar. Some sailors were standing near, and gazing on a little fishing-boat which was entering the bay. 'She will clear the Race yet,' said one of them to another, who looked on with some anxiety.

'Is there any danger?' inquired the widow, turning pale.

'Oh, no!' she's safe enough now,' said the man; 'but many's the boat that goes down yonder in the Race of Portland with this here wind.'

'May God protect my son!' murmured the widow, clasping her hands. Sarah spoke not, but she sank down half fainting on a rock, and wept.

'It is there—I see it. Is not that a yacht, just come in sight?' inquired Mrs. L——.

'It is, indeed,' said the sailor; 'and I would not be in that jimcrack of a thing for twenty pounds this blessed day.'

All eyes were now riveted on the yacht

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'The fools!—they are half a mile too near the head,' said the sailor. The widow and Sarah gazed with straining eyes, but soon all objects swam before them—they could see nothing, so intense was their fear.

The sailors uttered an exclamation of dismay. The mother tried to look, but nothing met her gaze except the blue sea and the heights of Portland! The yacht had disappeared.

Sarah shrieked with horror, and fell senseless on the ground.

'Go, fly!' exclaimed the widow; 'save, oh, save my son! A hundred—a thousand pounds to the man who can save him!'

The sailors stirred not. 'It is impossible,' they said; 'no boat can live in the Race with this wind.'

Was there then no hope?—and were the anxious prayers, and the tears, and intense love of these two enthusiastic beings, doomed to such a termination?

It was even so. Edward perished. He was cut off at the very moment when every earthly wish was about to be realized, at the very moment when the two strongest passions of his nature were gratified. He was, probably, thinking just before his end, 'How much the beloved ones will enjoy a sail in this yacht—how often we shall coast together round these romantic shores!'

He died; and the fond mother, the adoring bride, were left desolate. Poor Sarah was for a long time deprived of reason, and in her ravings she reproached herself as the murderer of Edward. But time at last has soothed, though it could not heal, the broken heart. Though Sarah has not attained the heavenly peace which I endeavoured to describe as characterising the aged mother, yet her life is spent in doing good, and Mrs. L—— says that her society, through a long life, has been the greatest happiness she has enjoyed.

* * * *

I am going to continue my account of recollections excited by the perfume of different flowers. At this moment the smell of Verbina recalls a very early and interesting impression.

In the ancient residence of the P—— family there is a south attic, which was inhabited for many years by an old housekeeper. She was ninety years old when I first remember her, and she had lived eighty years in the family.

I always loved old people, as well as old places; and I used to enjoy rambling with little Julia over the spacious house, and visiting the old housekeeper in her sunny attic, which she had not quitted for years.

There was a quaintness about the old woman and all that surrounded her, which pleased me the more from being different from everything else I ever saw. She always wore a black dress, with a long pointed waist and white sleeves, which on Sundays were decorated with old lace ruffles. Her pleasant face, and smooth grey locks, were snugly ensconced under a white cap. Its lace border was narrow and plain in front, but full behind, and was of that picturesque form now seldom seen in England, though it is still worn by peasants in the northern provinces of France.

The room contained several curious old cabinets, some richly carved oak chairs with embroidered backs, and a bed with red damask curtains and a patchwork quilt. The low ceiling, and every part of the room, had attained a rich brown Teniers hue from age, and from the smoke of a wood fire, which constantly burned in the wide chimney. Of the same mellow hue were the drawings, prints, and worked samplers on the walls.

How many interesting stories did that dear old dame tell of the originals of those smoke-dried pictures, and of the noble ladies who had worked the tapestry backs to her chairs! She would point out the story of Esther and Ahasuerus, which was her especial favourite, and remark how lively the colours were in the queen's robes.

Poor old dame! her eyes were dim, and more dim still were the faded colours in the embroidery; but her imagination was lively, and her still vivid and youthful feelings neither felt nor saw the changes which time had made.

The tears would sometimes roll down her pale cheeks, as she talked of the beautiful Lady ——, who had drawn that masterly sketch of a Greek warrior, and modelled the bust which stood on the chimney-piece. How feelingly she deplored the fate of that most lovely, yet most unfortunate of all her old master's family! At other times, she would laugh with delight as she described the marriage of her young master, the late possessor, and the birth and christening of the present.

If that old woman's stories could be told, they would form an interesting account of a family celebrated in the political, literary, and fashionable world of the last century.

What delighted me most then, were the old woman's flowers. By the aid of crutches, she could hobble about the room, and every morning she watered and tended her plants, which were ranged along the ledges of her two windows. My especial friend the verbina grew in a curious old vase of Delf china or ware, and of this she always gave me a sprig. Thanks be to that old woman, for I never smell it now without seeing that peaceful room, and the beautiful view which I used to stand on tiptoe to peep at, between the flower-pots; or hearing the mumbling sound of her toothless yet cheerful voice—the pleasant crackling of the wood fire, and the purr of a large Angora cat, her sole living companion.

The ramble up to her room, too, was delightful. Our great ambition was to find a different way each time we went. Sometimes, with playful fear, little Julia and I would venture through the old state apartments, and enter the tapestried bed-room, which was said to be haunted.

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We went always by daylight, but the closed shutters only allowed narrow streaks of light to penetrate. Often we trembled at the sound of our own footsteps on the polished floor, and screamed, half in terror, half in play, as we fancied, by the dim mysterious light, the old bed-curtains moved, and the pale figures in the tapestry paced to and fro. Clinging to each other for protection, we would fly at full speed, and close the door of the last room with a feeling that we had been very courageous indeed, and escaped some great danger. Then winding up a disused staircase, and through long passages where the worm-eaten boards creaked fearfully under our feet, we entered—O delight! —the large low lumber-room.

It was so called because the furniture it contained had been expelled from the magnificent rooms below, to make way for Grecian ornaments and statues, which the late lord had brought from Italy. In this lumber-room, China of all sorts, Indian cabinets, a very old spinet, a more modern harpsichord, rusty armour, and beautifully carved gilt chairs, were huddled together in strange confusion.

Often I lingered among these dust-covered vestiges of the olden time, till my less romantic and imaginative companion would run off and leave me alone; when, sitting down on an old tattered crimson sofa, and trembling with awe and delight, I would give way to all sorts of fancies. How I wondered at the old lady's courage in living all alone up there, near so many strange things; for in the whole upper story of that south wing there dwelt no living soul but herself.

So odd was the mixture of imagination and reality in my mind, that there were moments when I doubted the real existence of that old woman. I looked upon her with both affection and awe. So isolated was her life, (for though the servants, of course, attended to her wants, I never happened to meet any of them,) and I passed through so many strange places in going there, and imagined such wonderful things, that she seemed but like a continuation or more evident embodying of one of my fancies. I loved her, yet I did not quite like to touch her hand, and the kiss of her pale lips sometimes made me shudder.

Poor old dame! she often cried over the diminished fortunes of her master's family, and compared the present time with those glorious past days, when the ponderous family coach never stirred without six horses and outriders. 'In those days,' she would say, 'besides my lord and lady's attendants, each young gentleman and damsel of the family had always a serving man and a serving woman standing outside the door of their several rooms, ready to attend at a clap of the hands. Ah! there were no such lazy things as bells in those good old days,' ended the old dame, with a sigh.

When a rumour reached her that the place was to be sold, her tearful prayer was, that she might never live to see the estate in possession of a stranger.

In coming back from her room, to dispel our shadowy fears we generally chose a more inhabited way. Descending another winding staircase, we passed through the kitchen and housekeeper's room, where the acting successor to the old woman above, often gave us cakes and fruit.

After passing through all the offices, and peeping into all the rooms and pantries, we went up a private staircase, and opened a small odd-looking door which led direct into the master of the house's own sitting-room. In we dashed, and often interrupted his writing, and engrossed the few leisure moments of his time. But he loved us, and therefore bore that with patience from us which would have made him furious with other people.

'So you have been to see the old housekeeper?' he would say with a thoughtful air. 'Well, she must not be forgotten.' And then he turned over some huge books of accounts, and large parchments with big seals in the corner, and walked up and down the room, stroking his chin with a look of care and thought, and gazed through the open window on the sunny lawn and park, with its magnificent avenue, which extended nearly two miles from the house.

At last he would reseat himself with a resigned and almost cheerful expression, and resume the writing which we had interrupted.

I was too young at the time to divine the cause of all this; but as I vividly remembered the changes of expression on his handsome countenance, a clue has been furnished to their meaning in the events which followed.

The old place was soon after sold, no doubt to the regret of its owner, but he fulfilled his promise, and remembered the old servant. One of the stipulations of the sale was, that she should continue to occupy her accustomed attic in the south wing.

But the old woman's prayer was heard. A few days before the new possessor arrived she died!

HYMN TO SLEEP.

[Compare Statius, Sylv. 5, 4.]

Oh! whither flown?
By what deep error lost?
Spirit of calm! dost thou disown
My prayer—my vows—and leav'st me
passion-tost?

The fowl of air
In every forest nest,
Sleep sweetly, and the mountains wear
The misty veil of universal rest.

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Hoarse rivers seem
To hush their murm'ring mirth,
And ocean's billows voiceless dream,
Reclined along the shingled lap of earth.

No more, no more
Let yonder torches peep
In mocking from the heavenly shore,
Behold my fevered lids that burn for sleep.

I do not pray
The fulness of thy might,
Nor bid thee o'er my temples lay
Thy muffled pinions all the live-long night.

But strike my brow
With thy light touching rod,
That I may share thy bounties now,
Though for an hour, thou widely worshipped God!

Whitehaven. W. T.

THE OLD BACHELOR.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

'Think not the good,
The gentle deeds of mercy thou hast done,
Shall die forgotten all; the poor, the prisoner,
The fatherless, the friendless, and the widow,
Who daily own the bounty of thy hand,
Shall call to Heav'n, and pull a blessing on thee.'
Rowe's *Jane Shore.*

'GET me,' said I again, for about the hundredth time, to my still wondering footman, 'change for this five-pound note, all in silver; and mind, Thomas, as many sixpences as you can with it!'

'Yes, sir.'

'What can master possibly want with so much silver? Always on a Saturday night too!' I heard him say to Matha, my pretty housemaid, twirling the note between his thumb and finger, while I was slipping on my new Indian-rubber goloshes, ready to sally forth.

'No good, depend on it!' she rejoined, 'going out, let the weather be what it will, trampling in the rain and mud. I should just like to watch him, the old sinner!'

So invariably do the ignorant and narrow-minded judge of anything the least mysterious in our actions by the worst possible standard, *vice*—as if virtue never sought the veil of secrecy for its outgoings!

Matha had no idea that anything but wickedness, or '*no good*,' as she emphatically called it, could take me from my comfortable fire-side and book, to brave the inclemency of the season; 'at my age too!' verging on seventy; 'old enough to know better,' thought Matha—most certainly, had my motives for these almost nocturnal rambles been any other than the purest, the most charitable. I saw, by the significant shake of Thomas's head, that Matha's shrewd and ill-natured conjectures found a ready echo in his bosom.

I was undoubtedly the richest old bachelor in the large and populous market-town of D—— in the south of England, and am not ashamed to confess, my wealth was chiefly made in business.

I was considered rather mean by some of my acquaintance, who ostentatiously paraded their names, and a few guineas together, as annual subscribers to every public institution in the place. But while 'George Frederic Thompson, Esquire,' was blazoned forth in all the glory of 'English type,' for two guineas; 'a friend,' for ten, might be seen in modest 'brevier!' In truth, my sole delight now was to 'do good by stealth, and blush to find it fame.'

Why I was a bachelor, with a heart so warmly alive as mine was, even at that frigid period of life, to every tender and generous sentiment, was owing, alas! to the early blight of an affection which cost me twenty years of grief and sorrow, and which I cannot even think of now without the bitterest tear of regret, shed with all the poignancy of youthful feelings.

I had for years, winter and summer, made it a point to attend our large meat-market of a Saturday night, with such a supply of loose silver in my pocket as should preclude the possibility of that cold and heartless excuse—'I really would, but I have no change!' for so transient is the glow of benevolence sometimes, as actually to be extinguished at the bare idea of the trouble of changing money—(yet what a sickness of the soul do these few almost unheeded words cost the forlorn being who implores our aid!) Then, as I sauntered leisurely up and down before the tempting stalls, illuminated by the strong and vivid light of the gas lamps, I could mark the countenances of the different purchasers—observe the wishful gaze of the poverty-pinched mother, bargaining for that breast of mutton 'which would make her seven famished darlings such a delicious Sunday dinner'—see her lips quiver with hope and fear as she inquired the price, and detect the nervousness of her grasp, as she tremblingly and hesitatingly turned over and over again the delicate morsel. She evidently, methought, belonged to that truly deserving and industrious class, called 'char-women'—out all the week working like a slave to procure a few comforts for the Sabbath, to enjoy at least one day out of the weary seven with her children and husband, a bricklayer's labourer, perhaps thoughtless and improvident, spending nearly all his scanty wages in beer and tobacco; 'still he was her husband—the father of her children—the handsome Richard of her early love, almost as handsome now, and it was no hardship to toil for creatures so precious to her heart!'

At the moment she was convinced it was indeed beyond her small means, and she was turning hopelessly away to seek a less dain-

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ty and cheaper bit, out came the additional shilling or sixpence, as it might be, to complete the necessary purchase; and the meat was in her basket, and the tear of gratitude in her eye. 'Go!' I whispered, slipping two more shillings into her hand, 'and buy a little nice tea and sugar—I am sure you like it!'

I waited for no thanks from the wondering woman; I had no desire to be assured 'I was an angel of goodness;' I knew I was but a frail and erring mortal, and was content to be blessed in her prayers, aiming only to exemplify the poet's description of a truly charitable man.

'I mean the man who, when the distant poor
Need help, denies them nothing but his name.'

I will candidly confess, that when I first commenced these perambulations, I had no fixed purpose of benefiting my suffering fellow creatures; I was influenced more by a wish to divert myself from the solitude and anguish of my own thoughts, blended with a vague sort of benevolence; but when, after a little time, I perceived the real good I was able to effect, at the smallest possible sacrifice of trouble and money, the numberless hearts I gladdened, and the firesides I made cheerful and happy, it became the active principle of my life, and a rich and abundant harvest did I reap for my labours in the sweet and tranquil reflections of a self-approving conscience. The ameliorating hand of charity plucked the thorn from my midnight pillow, and soothed the bitterness of my care-worn existence!

One evening I was particularly struck with a young and rather genteel looking girl, inquiring most earnestly 'for a nice delicate sweetbread.' She could not be more than sixteen, and in the broad glare of the flaming gas I saw she was exquisitely fair and beautiful. The eagerness of her manner, and the evident superiority of rank over the generality of persons who frequented the stalls at that late hour, had an unfavourable effect on the young butchers to whom she applied, and many was the rude and heartless jest she had to endure from them. Still she went from stall to stall, with a degree of undaunted perseverance which would have awakened a feeling of disgust in my own bosom for conduct so unfeminine, had I not observed that she frequently and furtively dried a tear with the tattered remains of a once costly foreign shawl.

'She is no impostor!' I mentally ejaculated, feeling my own eye becoming suddenly dimmed by a tear too. 'That is the tear of modest misery. The hardened in deception would too gladly parade its grief to excite commiseration and pity.' I followed her like a shadow, as her slight agile figure flitted almost noiselessly from place to place, with the most intense interest and curiosity. At last she came to a stall containing almost every joint of veal, and I saw her eyes sparkle with renovated hope as she exclaimed breathlessly, 'Have you the sweetbread, sir?'

'How much will you will give for it, miss?'

'How much do you ask?'

'Five shillings. Will you give that?'

'O, most gladly! if you will trust me part?'

The man's brutal laugh literally rang through the wide square, as he replied, 'Come, that's capital!' Then adding, with a piece of popular slang too vulgar to repeat, and which, happily, she could not possibly understand, 'No, miss, I can't give no trust—you looks too suspicious for me.'

'Why are you so anxious to procure a sweetbread?' said I, gently touching her shoulder as she yet lingered there, as if every faculty was annihilated by this last severe disappointment.

She started with a degree of resentment in her countenance at the liberty; but seeing only an old man, she replied mildly, 'O, sir! it is for a dying sister—my only friend! She has not tasted any thing solid for the last fortnight, and to-day, while I sat by her as she slept, she was dreaming of a sweetbread, and spoke in her slumber of the good she was sure it would do her. I should have been here long before, but was obliged to finish some needle-work to obtain money enough to pay for it; and now they are all gone.'

It is impossible to convey an idea to my reader of the thrilling mournfulness of tone in which she pronounced these last few words. Her very heart seemed riven in twain with anguish at her utter want of success.

'You shall have a sweetbread,' said I, tenderly, 'for your dying sister, and every other comfort that can alleviate her sufferings, for the sake of the virtuous and holy affection you have evinced for her this night.'

The astonished girl, in the first bewilderment of delight at having so unexpectedly found a friend in her sore distress, seized my hand with the spontaneous movement of pure gratitude, and held it clasped firmly between her own, which trembled with emotion, but she was unable to articulate a word of thanks.

'Come,' I continued, leading her towards my own house, 'you need not fear an old man—my grey hairs shall be your security.'

On the way she told me her little history, unwished and unsolicited on my part, for I was predetermined to relieve her; but there is a proneness to candour and confidence in youth, which shows the heart is unsophisticated, and the bosom untainted by the world's vices.

She was no high-born dame, reduced by adverse fate to sudden want and misery, to make an interesting heroine in a fictitious story, but the daughter of a lieutenant in the navy only, who, having perished for his country, had left herself and sister, now dying of a consumption, to struggle as they best could in a pitiless world; their mother

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having died of the same fatal complaint some years before her gallant husband.

On reaching home with my fair but certainly rather doubtful-looking companion, Mr. Thomas opened his eyes to their very utmost extent.

'Tell Mrs. Williams,' said I, assuming a tone of unusual authority, the more effectually to repress his rising curiosity, 'to pack up that sweetbread I had ordered for my supper; some tea and sugar, a bottle of sherry, a little arrowroot, and anything else she may think useful for a sick lady—and make haste.'

Thomas vanished without uttering one word—not even his customary 'yes, sir,'—and soon returned, bearing a basket of goodly dimensions, quite filled, followed by Mrs. Williams, Matha, and the kitchen-maid, at a more humble distance, evidently all bursting with almost irrepressible curiosity to see the extraordinary being Thomas had informed them 'master had brought home with him.'

It is no consequence how dishevelled or disarranged the hair is in youth, the face from beneath it always looks lovely.

Clara Graham's, the name of my new acquaintance, retained only the least possible wave, owing to the extreme dampness of the atmosphere; but it was luxuriant beyond what I had ever before seen, of a rich light auburn. She sat without her bonnet, having taken it off to dry, by my desire, enjoying a biscuit and a glass of wine, perfectly unconscious of the ill-natured surmises her unexpected appearance had awakened in the bosoms of my jealous domestics, for an old bachelor's are invariably so. Oh! nothing is so winning, so beautiful, as that innate conviction of innocence which never suspects, nor thinks itself suspected. Suspicion and illiberality are the offspring of guilt, begetting in their turn that base desire to depreciate virtue, and bring it down to a level with its own fallen and degraded state.

The decorous housekeeper looked daggers at her and myself too, while she enumerated the articles she had 'condescended to pack up for such trumpery,' and I read the words 'good-for-nothing baggage' in Matha's bright eye as plain as eye could speak, while Thomas's expressed all too clearly, 'what an old profligate!'

Seeing me on the move, he said in his most obsequious tone, 'Shall I not carry the basket for the young lady, sir? It is very heavy.' He knew that was the most effectual means of fathoming the mystery.

'No—I shall carry it myself for her.'

'You, sir!'

'Yes, I. Come, my dear!' and away we both walked, or I, rather tottering under my enormous load. I could fancy the 'O mys!' and the 'Wells, I never!' of the disconcerted group who let us out in silent astonishment.

Clara lived in an obscure street, not far from my own residence, and I could not help feeling a sort of reproach at such virtue and misery struggling unknown and unpitied so near me. Her sister, a poor emaciated thing, was awake on our arrival. She hardly noticed the presence of a stranger, being too feeble to feel any excitement at passing events, but she said in the kindest manner to my companion, 'Dear Clara, I began to think you long; the fire grew low, and I was so cold!'

This drew my attention to the fire, which was nearly out, and which Clara began busily to endeavour to rekindle.

'Where is your domestic, my love?' said I to her.

'We have not kept one a long time,' she replied; 'I do all for poor dear Gertrude; she gives no trouble, and besides, servants are expensive, sir!'

'What!' I exclaimed, in inexpressible astonishment, 'you work at your needle like a slave, nurse your poor, helpless, sick sister, and attend to the household affairs too?—a mere child like you! Good heavens! it is not to be thought of.'

Late as it was, I took my hat, and hurried off to my own favourite surgeon, whom I fortunately found at home, and at leisure to attend to me. I begged him, in the first place, to recommend a nice, intelligent woman as a nurse, which he did at the moment, and in the next, to return with me to the house of the poor neglected invalid.

On examining her symptoms, I was delighted to find her complaint was not considered by him as consumptive, but an obstinate attack of the liver, brought on by a sedentary mode of life, and low and improper diet. And it is astonishing how much they resemble each other in appearance. The same dry cough, the same wasted and emaciated frame, and the same aches and pains over the languid and enfeebled body. He soon took his departure to order the necessary medicines for her, cautioning the weeping Clara not too noisily to express her joy at the prospect of her sister's recovery, as rest and tranquility were absolutely necessary to second his endeavours.

The nurse soon after arriving, a comfortable, motherly-looking sort of woman, after suitable instructions to her to take every care of the young ladies, and to spare nothing which she thought might conduce to the comfort of her suffering charge, I took leave of the grateful Clara, and hastened home, fatigued to death, but most supremely happy.

In a few weeks, Mr. Wentworth had the satisfaction of restoring his interesting patient to a state of convalescence. She was not so beautiful as Clara, but much more companionable, possessing a mind stored with the most useful and varied information, great conversational powers, and such a deep and enduring sense of religion, that it was impossible to listen to her without becoming wiser and better, feeling forcibly, as I gazed on her young pale face, truly, Lord, 'out of the mouth of babes and sucklings thou hast perfected praise.'

I visited them daily, strictly forbidding

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Clara, on pain of my displeasure, to set a stitch, except for the adornment of her own pretty person, which seemed indeed to be a labour of love, for never before had I seen such frilling and flouncing!

It is astonishing how affliction had subdued the buoyancy of her spirits, which now rose above the unnatural pressure, with an elasticity and joyousness truly enchanting; she was, in fact, a complete personification of youth and gladness. Some may admire the premature thoughtfulness which sorrow begets, but that can only be from a want of due reflection, for it is no more natural to think the sweet laughing face of youth looks best when shaded by grief, than to consider the sun appears to most advantage when overshadowed by dark and sullen clouds! No, no; youth is the season for joy and mirthfulness, and age for reflection and care.

I confess, at the end of three months of daily and uninterrupted intercourse, in which my affection and admiration hourly increased for them both, I began to feel their society was absolutely essential to my comfort and happiness, and am convinced, from what I saw of her disposition, that had I been selfish enough to have demanded such a sacrifice, the grateful Gertrude would willingly have become my wife, to repay the deep debt she felt she owed me;—but no; I wished to be a friend, a father to them both, and not make either pay so fearfully for the little good I had done. I was determined to accomplish the object now nearest my heart in a more satisfactory manner to my own conscience and the true happiness of the dear girls; I therefore took an early opportunity of entering into a full explanation about the peculiarly delicate and unprotected state of the fair orphans, with my discreet housekeeper, Mrs. Williams, expatiating largely on their amiable qualities and gentleness of manner, but was most guarded in my commendations of their personal charms, beauty, in the eyes of females of 'a certain age,' being considered almost a crime; and I concluded by expressing a wish to have them placed immediately under her protection—I dared not say my own. She was gratified and flattered by the well-timed compliment, and graciously consented to receive the young ladies, 'poor things!' and do her best to make them comfortable and happy.

I piously believed her, for she was a thoroughly benevolent-hearted woman, although strictly of the 'old school,' that is, she had not learnt to defy all morality and decency, but thought it still necessary to sacrifice something to appearances. The moment, however, you convinced her of the purity of the motive by which you were actuated, her zeal knew no bounds; she entered heart and soul into the affair, and, with all a woman's tenderness and tact, devised and invented a thousand plans to improve on the crudeness of one's own benevolence.

I departed with the alacrity of a boy to impart the pleasing negotiation to the dear girls, taking care to order dinner for three, and particularly mentioned a 'sweetbread' as one of the side-dishes.

Clara was in ecstasies at the proposal, but Gertrude received it with more reserve and caution, evidently weighing the consequences of such a step in all their bearings—the world's censure, the possibility of my repenting such generosity, and the misery of resuming poverty after tasting such luxury.

I read these painful and conflicting sentiments on her varied and ingenuous countenance, which was a mirror of truth and candour. My advanced age completely banished the first objection. My assurances that she was necessary to my comfort, the second. And she was completely conquered, when taking her hand, I said,

'Go or stay, my dear children, as you please; your decision will make no difference in my final arrangements respecting you both, as I intend leaving all I possess equally between you at my death, having no relations to injure by so doing, and knowing no human beings more deserving—and I humbly bless God for living long enough to be so useful at last—only you might, Miss Graham, had you felt so disposed, have made the short remnant of an old man's existence serene and happy.'

It was the first time I had ever used the formality of addressing her—as Miss Graham; she felt it sensibly, and bursting into tears, exclaimed, 'My dear, kind benefactor, forgive my cold calculations, but it was more for Clara's sake than my own that I hesitated. She is so young and beautiful, that if I can only keep her fair fame untarnished, she must settle fortunately in life. O! dear sir, that has been the sole hope of my heart for years, now more than ever strengthened, for I shall never, never marry now!'

A younger and vainer man than myself would have been apt to apply the conclusion of this speech most to the satisfaction of his self-love; in fact, I knew, from Gertrude's peculiar tone and manner, but too well what it meant; but having gained my point exactly as I wished, I affected the most profound ignorance as to what caused her, a young and pretty woman, to make so strange a resolution.

Nothing could exceed the exertions of the good Mrs. Williams during my absence, nor the cordiality of her welcome to the 'sweet young ladies,' and never did three happier persons sit down to dinner together. No longer was I compelled, by dire necessity, to linger out my solitary and unsocial meal, for the sake of deferring that period when, left entirely alone for the evening, I must turn to a book, whether so inclined or no, to steal me from the oppressive sense of my own loneliness and ennui.

Gertrude's painful remembrances of the past, and Clara's joyous and sanguine anticipations of the future, kept up a pleasing and varied conversation to a very protracted hour, alternating from melancholy to glad-

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ness, as all in life should be, that we may neither be too much depressed by the one, nor elated by the other. Again the light laugh of woman echoed in that large gloomy room; again her lighter step fell gladly on my ear; and again did my heart open its flood-gates of long pent-up affections, which gushed forth with an overpowering sense of felicity, almost too much to bear. There certainly is, to the feeling mind, a degree of pain attached to supreme happiness, which casts a momentary weight of sadness on the spirits, and awakens more often tears than smiles to express it by.

Clara received all the favours I heaped upon her with a profusion of the liveliest thanks, which delighted me, as there could be no doubt of the dear child's being perfectly happy, but Gertrude's sense of obligation was of a more exalted and heartfelt kind. It was evident, from the devotedness of her attentions, and the watchfulness of her manner, that she studiously sought every opportunity of repaying them to the utmost of her power; her heart was noble and generous, but it was proud to the last degree; and every word and sentiment too plainly expressed that her happiness would have consisted in conferring, and not in receiving, favours.

Their two characters, so opposite, yet both so truly amiable and feminine, furnished me with continual food for reflection. When Clara kissed me, and blessed me, and called me 'her dear second papa,' I felt it was the artless effusion of almost infantile affection—the heart responded a blessing at her innocent happiness, and then subsided into a state of serenity amounting nearly to forgetfulness. But when Gertrude silently and warmly pressed my hand, while her dark reflective eye swam in tears, I felt, indeed, it was from the irrepressible emotion, drawn from the mighty indwellings of woman's loving heart, and the impression defied the power of oblivion to efface it.

Yes, yes, brilliant and volatile, my lovely Clara, like the gaudy and heedless butterfly, must excite the desire of instant pursuit, but when obtained would she, alas! be more prized? While Gertrude, in the unobtrusiveness of her retiring nature, when once known, must be for ever loved and esteemed.

I had no profligate son, or artful, designing nephew, to bestow my darling Clara and ten thousand pounds upon. But she spared me the embarrassment of finding a husband for her, choosing one for herself in the son of her father's old commander, also a lieutenant in the navy; and never was there a finer specimen of a frank, open-hearted, honourable young man than George Forrester.

Many may think this was not quite so good a match as her beauty and fascinations entitled her to; perhaps not, where riches and a high-sounding title are considered, how mistakenly, the only essentials to happiness; but for my part I do not know to whom one could entrust the real happiness of a fond, artless girl so securely, as to a generous, noble-minded, affectionate young sailor.

Finding all my advice about the propriety of his taking another voyage, at least, before the wedding, quite disregarded, I gave my consent for it to take place early in the spring, and a very gay affair Clara is determined to make it, or rather them; for I find it is the intention of Mr. Thomas and Matha to be married, too, on the same day, 'as dear Miss Clara and Mr. George.' And if I cannot retain my amiable Gertrude on any other terms, I think I shall make up my mind to be called 'an old fool' by the world, and secure myself a charming friend and companion for life.

Let no one imagine, after reading this simple tale, chiefly founded on facts, that he is too old to exercise an active benevolence; indeed, as we approach nearer to the grave, our feelings of universal charity ought to increase with every receding year; as, in a short time, we must appear before that Being, who is all goodness, to render an account of the manner we have employed the 'talent' entrusted to us, and receive its final reward or punishment.

SIMILITUDINES.

BY MISS H. B. MACDONALD.

No. I.

THE IMPRISONED BIRD.

They bound him; with his gleaming eyes,
Whose brightness had been caught,
From gazing upon southern skies.
They bound him with the rainbow dyes,
Wherewith his plume was fraught—
Nourished within the glorious beams
Of eastern sunshine's living streams.

They bound him; with his burning heart,
Whose currents deep and strong,
Even as the lightning's bright wild dart—
Aimless, unfettered, wanting art,
Came bursting forth in song:
And they bade him suit his heart and eye,
To the shame of his captivity!

They thought his wing would glitter still,
Slave of their vanity;
They thought that they might bid his thrill
Of music kindle at their will,
And make the enslaver's joy;—
In vain!—that bright plume withered,
And voice was silent with the dead!

And thus, young poet! if 'tis thine
To waste thy feelings high—
The immortal aim—the thought divine—
To bind them victims at the shrine
Of wretched vanity;—
To minister thy heart's excess
Unto a world's deep heartlessness:

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Then woe! for that sweet gift of thine,
Profaned and waxing dim,
With voice whose best meed's now to pine
Above its home, no more divine,
In some expiring hymn,
That through the ruin sad doth sound,
Leaving a wakeless silence round!

December, 1840.

THE NOTE-BOOK OF AN IRISH BARRISTER.—No. XVII.

LORD CHIEF-JUSTICE BUSHE.

Quinti Hortensii admodum adolescentis ingenium, ut Phidiæ signum, simul adspectum et probatum est.—CICERO.

In looking through the Irish bench and bar for an illustrious name, among the first that meets the eye of the observer, is that of Chief-justice Bushe. The intense nationality of feeling—the genuine ardour with which he threw himself into the struggle at the time of the Union, endeared him to his countrymen, and created an enthusiasm in his behalf, which, after forty years, still sanctifies his name. We have far too pious an affection for his venerable character to taint it by an intermixture with the factious wranglos of the present day. His opinions may have varied from their ancient standard—be that as it may, Charles Kendal Bushe will long command the reverential homage of Irishmen, from the zeal which, through a long contest, he inflexibly displayed for their civil and religious rights,—from his liberal and elevated principles, which were ever favourable to impartial government, and, whilst in office, served to mollify the rigour of oppressive administrations, and from his humane and generous bearing as a judge, who knew how to expound the laws with firmness, but without that extrajudicial bitterness which, in Ireland, long lowered the dignity and stained the purity of the ermine.

When we first entered on these biographical notices we did not intend to interfere with the 'Sketches of the Irish Bar.' We shrank from the pretence of rivalry, for rivalry implies Equality. We could not for a moment indulge in such an expectation, and therefore we stood afar off. But, to use the pedantic phraseology of a celebrated modern writer, 'to me, revolving these things in my mind, it occurred,' that as the characters of the Chief-justice and such men will be the subject-matter of future history, it would be unjust to them, and to the country whose renown is imperishably interwoven with theirs, to yield to the monopoly of a single genius, and not to contribute our mite to the fund of historical materials. The writer of the 'Sketches' resembles, in some degree, the ancient epicure, who even of a peach could eat nothing but the sunny side. Our fare is more coarse and homely. We cannot be fastidious, for we have no choice, being ungifted with those rare powers of eloquent description which characterized his brilliant pen. But if we cannot give a splendid picture, we shall at least endeavour to produce a faithful portrait—if we cannot rise into lofty declamation, we shall be safer by keeping close to the ground. The abode of truth is not among the stars, but in the bottom of a well, for whom we have sedulously searched, and we hope not without success. Certain incidents in the following memoir may excite painful recollections. We would deeply regret any such result, but even though it were so, we would not be justified in sacrificing truth to feeling. We hope, however, our surmises are unfounded, for willingly we would not awaken one disagreeable emotion in any human being. It is little to say that the career of such a man as Charles Kendal Bushe deserves to be treated as a theme of a lofty and general interest. To preserve a fair and correct estimate of his genius, principles and services, is a sacred debt of national justice as well as of national policy.

The Chief-justice, whom, until the period of his promotion, we shall call by his older and fonder name, Charles Kendal Bushe, was born in Kilkenny, where his youthful days were spent in that brilliant and accomplished society of which he afterwards formed so conspicuous an ornament. His father was a clergyman of the Established Church, a man of rare acquirements, and passionately fond of literature, which he communicated to his son, and of which the latter took an early and decided advantage. The family of Bushe is one of the most ancient and honourable in Ireland—several of its members having had seats in the Irish House of Commons almost from the Revolution down to the Union, and all distinguished for their public and private virtues, when corruption sat alike in high and low places. Gervas Parker Bushe was one of the parliamentary leaders, and equally remarkable for his patriotism, courage, and eloquence. In the distribution of the five great grievances in 1775, the Perpetual Mutiny Bill was allotted to him; and the debate on that important question, five years after, showed how ably he discharged his duty to his country. In the society of such men, young Charles imbibed the first principles of his political education. In due time he entered college a fellow commoner. As Doctor Johnson said of Lord Mansfield, 'when he came to town he drank champagne with the wits.' Had he no other passport than the sprightliness of his wit, and the charms of his conversation, he would have found his way into the agreeable circle which then composed the society of the metropolis. Although moving betimes in the train of fashion, he had higher aspirings than its fri-

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volous triumphs—he felt that he was born for much more than to dazzle for a day, and be forgotten. Eloquence then was the surest and most rapid way to distinction—it was the torch that led the successful votary to honour and emolument, and he applied himself to its cultivation with unwearied industry. He had within him the powers that give it vitality—nature and national feeling. Irish oratory may be laughed at for its vitiated style. True, it is peculiar; but every nation that ever rose to grandeur in any department of intellect, has invariably wrought after its own heart. Every people has an original spirit of its own, and the unfettered movement of the native genius of the land is the only way to eminence in anything that the world accounts great and noble. Without originality there can be no superiority in anything. The man who hopes for fame through eloquence, must yield to the impulses of his own spirit, rather than follow the cold rules of rhetoric. Where Nature has denied one of the highest gifts, study is in vain. Practice will make a fluent and effective speaker, but not an orator. Where the divine spark is not, the most persevering labour can only carry eloquence to where genius begins, and there leaves it in despair. We are far from saying that natural power is not aided and developed by a proper degree of cultivation. On the contrary, one cannot much avail without the other—the combination of both ensures oratorical renown.

Animated with the loftiest ambition, and inflamed by the splendid triumphs that awaited eloquence at the senate, the pulpit, and the bar, Mr. Bushe commenced his training in the College Historical Society, which enrolled among its members the proudest names that Ireland ever had. There he soon put forth all the brilliant qualities in blossom, which afterwards bore such rich and abundant fruit. With an original power of conception, inferior, perhaps, to the illustrious men who preceded him, he fairly outshone them in the vivid grace of his manner, and the polished elegance of his language. This was only a work of time and labour, for the tendency of his youthful efforts was to exaggeration of sentiment and exuberance of diction. It is, indeed, no easy thing to sober down the captivating style of our youth, and to dismiss notions of excellence endeared by early habits. He, however, resolved to master the difficulty, and properly equip himself for the battle and the conquest. Every succeeding session witnessed his improvement, and Grattan, a no mean authority, who heard him on one occasion, declared, 'that he spoke with the lips of an angel.' He was called to the bar in 1790, whither his high character for eloquence preceded him. His connection with the society, where he armed himself for many a future combat, was not, however, yet broken, for he was unanimously chosen to deliver the closing speech of the first session without the walls. The society had grown far too liberal for the dull bigots who tore down the picture of Grattan from their walls, and, in secret conclave, voted him '*a rebel!*' After an existence of twenty-four years, it was driven without the walls, to the sorrow of every man who witnessed the noble and generous emulation it excited, and the powers which it nurtured. There was no distinguished person of the day who could not trace his success to his connection with the society, and all looked on its annihilation as a national loss. Mr. Bushe closed the first Extern Session in a speech which won universal admiration.

'What,' said he, 'is our crime? that we should be affronted by a general proscription—by an indiscriminate expulsion in our advanced life from that institution which our youth created, preserved, and adorned—that those names should be ignominiously obliterated, whose exertions, whose labours, whose honours, swell the numerous volumes now piled on your tables, at once displaying the glory and antiquity of your institution. But we will forgive our enemies everything but the necessity they have imposed on us of thus blazoning ourselves. *Let panegyric, then, like satire, tread in the Flaminian way.* Will you consent to affront your dead? Will you stoop to stigmatize with posthumous disgrace those departed friends, consecrated in your hearts and embalmed by every tender memorial? Will you suffer that malignity which spares not even the sanctuary of the grave, to insult the names of your *Temple, Emmett?* That name to this institution, to his profession, to his country, renowned and venerated—that loss which has been irreparable, but that, like the alternate lustre of the twin constellations, when he sank beneath the horizon, he left a *brother* luminary to irradiate the hemisphere.'

The celebrated eulogy of Grattan on Dean Kirwan was manifestly the model on which the following beautiful passage was constructed. It is more ornate and laboured than the original, and has not its force of expression, yet its splendour as a piece of panegyrical declamation is unquestionable.

'There are men who have even put in issue whether oratory has been useful to mankind, and have reasoned eloquently against all eloquence. In what department of life, then, lies the danger of this fascinating destruction? Did St. Paul mistake the spirit of Christianity, when he spoke with the tongues of angels and of men? Has religion, has charity suffered by the eloquence of Kirwan? That great man revived, if he did not create, pulpit eloquence. The dulness of mankind had conspired with their vices to fetter the pulpit in the shackles of inexertion. The smallest attempt at composition was spurned at as conceited—any attempt at oratory derided as theatrical. Stupidity became orthodoxy, and genius reluctantly bridled itself at the peril of heresy. But the mighty powers of that man

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broke down the despotism of prejudice, and what was the consequence? Churches overflowed—religion disdained not the aid of genius; with an holy indignation he smote the haughty ones of the earth, and denounced them before their God. Pride, like Felix, trembled before him. His eloquence, at once pathetic and commanding, opened all the sources of compassion, and forced all the fortresses of vice. Flinty avarice, callous profligacy, selfish ambition, all melted before him—their tears and their alms flowed together. Captivity was released—the fatherless and orphans were adopted—the widow's heart sang for joy. Nor did it end here. The example was infectious—a sanctified emulation pervaded the profession—universal exertion took place—universal benevolence has followed it, and public charity has become the characteristic of our country. Bring me, then, the cold-hearted theologian, who tells me that oratory is anti-clerical, and I will tell him that he is unfit for his high calling, because his soul warms not his intellect in the discharge of it. He will never do that good to others which is the essence of his duty. He may serve out homilies with the phlegm of a Dutchman—he may laboriously entangle the simple duties of the gospel in the embarrassing mazes of a learned controversy, and profane its mysteries by presumptuous explication. He may make the Prophecies a riddle, and the Revelation a conundrum; and think himself, like Œdipus, in virtue of his blindness, entitled to solve the enigma; but he is not the sanguine, the zealous, the efficient officer of God, who is to turn many to righteousness, and whose reward is, that he shall shine like the stars for ever and ever.'

Mr. Bushe was first returned to parliament for the borough of Callan, and he immediately joined the opposition party. The bright offerings he brought to the shrine of his country were, genius, courage, and eloquence; and the records of the nation bear testimony to the power with which all were exerted, although in vain. He had fallen on the evil days of Ireland, and often did he regret that he had not been thrown back into that memorable period, when the volunteers, with swords in their hands, and the glorious voice of Grattan shouting in their van, aroused the Irish parliament from the grave of its corruption to assert its dignity, and vindicate the ways of national freedom. Charles Bushe was worthy of such times; and the same manly eloquence and intrepid bearing that were displayed to avert the defeat, might have served to dignify the triumph. He was the last recruit of liberty, and, though young in years and experience, he fought with the firmness and skill of the oldest veteran. When he joined, the battle was all but over—the struggle was still going on, but it was manifest to all that the death-rattle was in the throat of the parliament. On the first division, the minister was beaten by a slender majority, and great were the rejoicings thereat,—but the defeat was only temporary. The minister had gold and honours to bestow, and a small section of the opposition was too frailly constituted to resist the fascination. In such circumstances, the patriotic party had only to combat on to the last, giving no quarter and taking none.—'Armed with a glory high as his despair,' Mr. Bushe was found at his post calling to the rescue whatever of energy, spirit, and purity, still held out against the assaults of the Castle. He disputed the ground inch by inch, never despairing of freedom whilst a single defender remained to the constitution. Young, ardent, and enthusiastic, his voice was heard above all, reanimating the sinking soldiers of liberty with the trumpet tones of a splendid eloquence. 'Let me,' said he on one memorable occasion, 'conjure this house to consider whether this is a transaction on which they are willing to commit themselves, their properties, their characters, and their children. Let me conjure them to weigh that question well, if every generous feeling be not banished from amongst us; and if private honour and public virtue be not a name. Where is that spirit which in '82 swelled the crest, and ennobled the character of the Irish gentry—which achieved liberty for Ireland, extorted justice from England, and admiration from Europe? Is it fled and extinguished for ever? I will not believe it. But were every appeal to everything human fruitless and vain, I would invoke that Providence which, even in my short life, has stretched his protecting arm so often over my country! In my short life, my country has been raised from a province to become a nation—has been protected from a bloody rebellion and a formidable invasion, and has seen one desperate attack against her liberties and constitution defeated and overthrown. *I will rely on God to save Ireland.*' The excitement created by Mr. Bushe's speech was immense, and its effect was only surpassed by that famous one of Plunkett, which Curran said was worthy the best days of ancient eloquence. But it was not in the senate alone that Mr. Bushe so proudly distinguished himself—he was as bold and eloquent with the pen as with the tongue. The political atmosphere was then darkened with clouds of pamphlets. Every base scribbler sufficiently servile and malignant to slander his country, came forward with his half sheet of imbecility. Among these there were some with pretensions to ability, and the principal one was entitled 'Arguments for and against the Union,' by Mr. Secretary Cooke, on which of course the influence of the 'For's" was all-powerful. Mr. Bushe undertook the easy task of demolishing this pyramid of nothings in a small brochure, called, whimsically enough, 'Cease your Funning.' It abounded with exquisite wit, keen and polished sarcasm, easy humour, and acute and weighty reasoning. This felicitous and cutting attack excited all the sympathies of a late judge in favour of the well-curried secretary; and he replied to Mr. Bushe in a series

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of well-written essays. The secretary, however, felt the sting, for he afterwards declared that the pamphlet gave him more pain than all the attacks of the opposition.

At the bar meeting, to adopt measures for resisting the Union, Mr. Bushe was present, and his name appears among the fourteen king's counsel who signed the requisition. He took a very active part in this demonstration of the bar, which, to its honour, spoke out with the characteristic courage of patriotism, and that noble exaltation which is due to the profession. During the last debate on the Union, all the resources of his brilliant intellect were brought into play. Connected with his conduct on this occasion, we have an incident not unworthy of recording here:—Some years ago, Mr. O'Connell defended the proprietor of the *Pilot* newspaper, in the Queen's Bench, for the publication of one of his own letters, which originally appeared in one of the London journals. His speech was allowed to be one of the finest pieces of advocacy ever spoken at the Irish bar. The trial excited the greatest interest, for O'Connell had made himself up for a magnificent effort, as his policy was as much involved in the issue, as the guilt or innocence of his client. The jury were not of the most liberal character—somehow the twelve wonderfully sympathised, and had not one feeling in common with the advocate or his cause. For some time before the trial, Mr. O'Connell, in his stirring letters on the Union, made a very free use of the early sentiments of the Chief-justice, and though the latter well knew that the address to the jury would not be without a due mixture of such topics, he presided. Mr. O'Connell began with the skill and genius of a consummate master. He alluded to the possible difference of opinion between his client and a majority of the jury, and after having read the alleged libel and forcibly commented on the several passages, he asked, was his client to be punished for sentiments which were spoken by such men as Plunkett, Saurin Jebb, and Gould? 'Hear,' said he, 'Lord Chancellor Plunkett!' He then repeated his famous declaration. 'Hear what said the ablest lawyer that Ireland ever had!' He then read a passage from Saurin's speech: and so he went, most eloquently panegyrizing each. 'But gentlemen,' said he, looking expressively at the bench, 'there was one in that array of immortal names—conspicuous above all for the sublimity of his genius—renowned for every virtue that can dignify man—whose memory will be handed down through the most distant ages, and will find an everlasting monument in the heart and history of Ireland!' Here the Chief lost his usual composure; he became much agitated, and looked at Mr. O'Connell, as if beseeching him to spare the eulogy. But the advocate had a brilliant game, and he played it well. 'Yes, gentlemen, there was one who stood in the breach of the constitution, and hurled the bolts of his indignant eloquence at the unprincipled oppressors. If one man could protect the sanctuary from pollution, he was that man. What does he say? "I strip this formidable measure of all its pretences and its aggravations. I look at it nakedly and abstractedly, and I ask but one question—Will you give up your country? It is a measure which goes to degrade the country by saying it is unworthy to govern itself, and to stultify the parliament by saying it is incapable of governing the country. It is the revival of the odious and absurd title of conquest—it is the renewal of the abominable distinctions between the mother country and the colony—it is a denial of the rights of nature to a great nation, from an intolerance of its prosperity." Here Mr. O'Connell laid down the paper from which he read, and remained silent for some seconds, while not the faintest noise was heard from the bar, and the crowded porches and galleries. After this pause—more eloquent in its silence than the most expressive language—he looked at the jury with a smile of enthusiasm on his lips, and his whole countenance lit up with an air of triumph. 'Whose were these inspired words? Who thus defended the altar of liberty from profanation? The illustrious member for Callan —*Charles Kendal Bushe!*'

It would be difficult to describe the effect these last words produced. All pitied and honoured the Chief-justice. He struggled severely with his feelings, which at last he found impossible to repress. We do not envy the man who could censure this ebullition of a manly nature. The recollection of other times was brought back to his mind—he thought of the great and good men with whom he was worthily associated in the first of all human causes, and when the faded colours of that grand historic picture were revived in all their original freshness by the inimitable pencil of such a consummate artist as Mr. O'Connell, it was impossible for a mind less sensitive than his to be indifferent to the emotions which the remembrance of such men and such deeds was sure to create. So far the eloquence of the advocate was triumphant, but in nothing more. The libel law and a Dublin jury were far too powerful, even for his matchless oratory.

Mr. Bushe's conduct on the Union was his crowning glory. In that disastrous crisis, when corruption, like wisdom in the Proverbs, cried aloud in the streets, and few were heedless of her call, his integrity was unshaken. He might have had honours—he might have rioted in the foulness of ignominious distinction, but he was firm and unpurchaseable. Men of far less pretensions reaped the rich but unenviable reward of their shameless profligacy; they surrendered their votes and consciences for hard cash, or as profitable pensions. They obtained the wages of their iniquity, though the wages were death to their reputation and their country. When such disgusting wares were marketable, how welcome would Mr. Bushe have been to the ranks of the minister! With what distended arms would Castlereagh have embraced such a promising de-

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serter from the camp of patriotism! The terror of the Castle and its creatures—the daring and eloquent assailant of 'the spectres of the Treasury bench'—the young, active, and undaunted patriot; there was nothing too high for his purchase. But his honesty was solid as adamant; a juvenile Fabricius, he looked with proud contempt on the alluring heaps that dazzled many an eye less steady, and debauched many a heart less resolved. He had imbibed far different lessons than those of recreancy and dishonour from the society of the pure and self-sacrificing men to whom he had attached himself, and whose principles of freedom he faithfully represented throughout his whole career.

To the bar, the annihilation of the parliament seemed to have given an irrecoverable blow, for it no longer possessed a legislature to foster its strength, and train up its aspiring members to the honours of statesmanship. We doubt whether this opinion was well founded, for although the Irish bar lost much of its power as an influencing body in the state, yet the cancer was excised which corrupted its usefulness, and impeded its advance to professional acquirements. We fully agree with Professor Napier in his estimate of the change. 'The fame,' he observes of the bar of Ireland, 'has long been regarded as national property; and it has poured a splendour on the records of the senate, that has filled the heart of Ireland with maternal pride. But the days of eloquence are gone—the throes of genius are over. If, however, the bar lacks the lustre and blush of hectic loveliness, it exhibits an healthful familiarity with the principles and precepts which are the honour of the advocate and the safety of the subject.'

Very differently thought the lawyers of 1800. They imagined that the glory of their tribe had departed, and among them Mr. Bushe. He felt the blow perhaps too acutely, and resolved at first on going to the English bar, from which he was prevented by the earnest remonstrances of his friends. Those who knew him in his palmy days, doubt not that he would have been signally successful as an advocate, and would have attained the highest honours as a parliamentary orator. Grattan, Curran, and Plunkett thought so. But his lot was cast for the land of his birth; and however much we may regret that he neglected so noble a field of exertion, still we rejoice that the Irish bar has retained so illustrious an ornament. Though the Union was a temporary evil, it was not unaccompanied with some important benefits to him. Had the parliament continued, he would be always found in opposition, and consequently out of office; but when it was no more, a compromise was not only easy, but useful and honourable. The superior abilities of Mr. Bushe could not possibly be passed over by any minister, and the sole difficulty lay in his acceptation of office. Beloved by all parties—endeared to the one by national pride and national recollections, and to the other by the proclaimed liberality of his views, his popularity was only inferior to that of Grattan. Such a man, in such times, must be a powerful acquisition to any government. When Mr. Plunkett went out with the Grenville administration in 1803, Saurin was raised to the Attorney-generalship, and the office of Solicitor was accepted by Mr. Bushe, just thirteen years after he was called to the bar. No man ever filled that office with more honour to himself and efficacy to the government. The violent contention of parties often placed him in positions of great delicacy, but his commanding tact invariably enabled him to escape, not only with a character untainted, but elevated through each succeeding crisis. Saurin's animosity to the Catholics was well known, while the sympathies of his colleagues in their behalf were equally remarkable. This diversity of opinion became more decided on the trial of the Catholic delegates. The reputed violation of Lord Clare's Convention Act, and its consequences, are too well known to be narrated here at any length. Mr. Kirwan was indicted on the advice of Saurin. Mr Bushe was most reluctant to take a part, but the government calculated too well on his power with a jury to let him off. The situation was one of considerable embarrassment. How was he to act? How to discharge his duties as law officer, and maintain his fair fame as a friend to Catholic rights? An advocate of less resources must have sacrificed one by adhering to the other; but he possessed a rare skill, and while he attacked the Catholic Board he vindicated the rights to which they were entitled. The following vivid description is from the pen of a contemporary:—'Saurin exhibited a sombre virulence, which was calculated to excite wonder rather than conviction. Its gloomy animosity was without a ray of eloquence. But the Solicitor-general produced a very different effect. He stood before the jury as the advocate of the Catholic cause to suppress the Catholic Board. The members of that body had been designated as *miscreants* by Saurin—the Solicitor-general called them his *friends*. With a consummate skill, he professed himself the champion of the people, and put forth all his ardour in insisting on the necessity of concession to millions of men. To the utterance of these sentiments, which astonished Saurin, he annexed the full power of his wonderful delivery. His countenance became inflamed, his voice assumed all the varieties of the most impassioned intonation, and his person was informed, and almost elevated, by the consciousness of the noble sentiment which he was enforcing for the purpose of investing the very fallacies which he intended to inculcate with the splendid semblance of truth. After having wrought up the audience to enthusiasm, and alarmed the Attorney-general by declaring, with an attitude almost as noble as the sentiment it was intended to set off, that he would throw the constitution to his

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Catholic countrymen as widely open as his own breast, he suddenly turned back, and after one of those pauses, the effect of which can be only felt by those who have been present on such occasions—in the name of those very principles of justice which he had so powerfully laid down, he implored the jury to suppress an institution which he declared to be the greatest obstacle to the success of that measure, for the sake of which it had been ostensibly established.' With a jury, which it had been publicly stated in the House of Commons was furnished by the secretary to the crown-solicitor, and by him to the sheriffs, and the powerful declamation of Mr. Bushe, it was not difficult to ensure a vedict. The opponent of the Board did not, however, lose much in popular esteem; his advocacy was considered by the Catholics as a necessary part of his duty, while they regarded with admiration an officer of the crown who had the courage to stand up in a court of justice in defence of their liberties. Several years after, when there was a vacancy in the representation of Dublin by the death of Mr. Grattan, and Mr. Bushe expressed a wish to stand, the Catholics determined to support him; but respect for his departed friend, whose son became a candidate, prevented him—one of the finest tributes of reverential respect that was ever paid to the memory of that illustrious man. In 1812, on Lord Morpeth's motion on the state of Ireland, and in 1817, when the conduct of the law-officers of the crown was called in question by Mr. Sheridan—on both occasions Mr. Grattan most ably defended the Solicitor-general. He said of him that he was celebrated for his genius, as well as his professional knowledge and love of the constitution—that he had acted with him on many public occasions, when he displayed the most exalted patriotism, and that he admired his virtues, and was proud of his friendship. Such a panegyric was worthy the giver and receiver.

In the great case of the crown against the late Chief-baron O'Grady, Mr. Bushe was for the first time fairly pitted against an adversary of equal power and reputation, Mr. Plunkett. The greatest men at the Irish bar were on both sides, and the case created extraordinary interest. The friends of Mr. Bushe were alarmed for the issue of the encounter. Plunkett's vast powers were all concentred for the struggle—he worked hard for the Chief-baron, to whose friendship he was indebted for many a kind office. Saurin opened in a speech of great perspicuity, and replete with profound reasoning. Plunkett followed, and discharged a torrent of burning sarcasms on the head of the Attorney-general, who never after forgot or forgave the injury. Bushe closed for the crown. By the way, the *crown* reminds us of an illustration. Æschines was splendid while Demosthenes was silent, but who that read the *De Coronâ*, in all its marvellous felicity of reply and retort, did not at once yield the palm to the great orator? The combatants in the present case were far different, but the effect on the audience was not unlike. All imagined that a reply was impossible; but when the Solicitor-general spoke, their opinions changed. In cutting vituperation he left Plunkett far in the rear, and though the latter was more profound and argumentative, the former was more keen and persuasive. As a specimen of ludicrous description the following is admirable:—'The menial servants of the court are the officers of whom Baron George gives evidence. That high officer, the cryer, is first. According to Lord Coke, the court and chief judge are deeply interested that he should well and truly *cry* when he calls the witnesses to the box and the plaintiff to be non-suited. Then follows the tipstaff, an important personage, who beareth a black rod surmounted with silver, and chaseth away the boys. Last appears the court-keeper, a comely matron, belonging by the statute of Westminster exclusively to the Chief-baron, and to whom no junior baron can lay claim, unless when "my lord" is out of town. And she too is appointed by virtue of the reasonableness of the common law, because, as Lord Coke says, "The law doth ever appoint those that have the *greatest skill and knowledge to perform that which is to be done.*" I am ashamed of this levity; if this part of the case has become ridiculous, it is not our fault.' The rivalry between the two great men on this occasion did not interfere with their ancient friendship. Plunkett was severe and bitter, but the vial of his invective was poured out principally on the Attorney-general.

Mr. Bushe continued in the office of Solicitor-general until 1822, being a period of nearly nineteen years, when Chief-justice Downes withdrew from the bench. Saurin was offered the vacancy. He dallied with the appointment — at one time accepting, at another refusing, for his aspirations were directed to the chancellorship. He erred sadly in his calculations. A rapid and unexpected change precipitated his party from power, and he was suddenly hurled from the lofty eminence on which he stood so long, never more to rise. The blow was terrible, and he bore it ill. When the Marquis of Wellesley came over, the Chief-justiceship was offered to Mr. Bushe, and cheerfully accepted, to the delight of every man who valued illustrious talents, unsullied honour, and inflexible integrity. No appointment was ever more popular, for during his protracted service as one of the first law officers of the crown, when a bitter animosity pervaded the contending parties of the state, he held the balance even, and if he ever inclined from the level poise, it was to encourage and protect the weaker. Twenty years of his judicial life are now almost past, and whoever runs over that period must arrive at the conclusion that the sword of justice was never committed to more able and impartial hands.

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While the laws found in him a profound and learned expounder, they were never strained in letter or in spirit; he vindicated their majesty by firmly upholding them, and ensured for them respect by a well-timed clemency. He knew at the same time, how to be just to society and merciful to the criminal. No political bias ever warped his mind, or sullied the purity of his ermine; and the compliment paid to his honourable impartiality by such a deadly hater of the bench as Captain Rock—that he wore the collar of Moran without ever a pinch to remind him of his judicial delinquency—is a testimony in his favour of immense value, coming as it does from a member of a family which the Chief-justice always treated with the most rigorous severity.

The eloquence of the Chief-justice was allowed by all to be of a first-rate character. He could state plainly, reason calmly, argue logically, or on the other hand seem transported into vehemence by his feelings, and roused by his subject into splendid imagery, yet he never forgot to return to fact and argument. His fancy, like Grattan's, was sometimes on the stretch; but never, like Curran's, on the rack. Some critics considered his style too rhetorical, but to the confusion of all criticism, though dissatisfied as critics, they were delighted as hearers. When he began to speak, a common observer might have thought him awkward, but when he had proceeded for a few minutes, his thoughts and language assumed a luminous and orderly disposition. As he went on, his genius warmed and expanded, and while he gave full reins to the impulses of impassioned feeling, his judgment and tact never for a moment forsook him. His excitement was always subordinate to his reason; and though he sometimes touched the confines of the debateable land between imagination and argument, he knew when to check his career, and withdraw from that perilous ground. Mr. Philips says that he was emphatically the orator of manner—that his face, his gestures, his very eye and hand spoke. Though exaggerated, there is some truth in the observation. Perhaps no speaker ever employed such graceful and effective action. He studied the advice of the ancient orator to perfection, and while he did not neglect the muscle and sinew of eloquence, he was particularly careful of its embellishments. He was the Hortensius of the Irish bar; and though we never heard that he brought an action of damages for ruffling the folds of his gown, he was not the less a true disciple of the Roman advocate in cultivating the effect of striking attitudes and graceful gestures. Under any circumstances, the fascination of such a speaker must be very great, and when we add the fullness of his tones, the melodious clearness of his articulation, and the richness, copiousness, and brilliancy of his language, we must rank him with the most distinguished of our orators. On reading the existing fragments of his speeches, we cannot fail to form this estimate; but what if we had heard him? The magic of the voice, the flashing of the eye, the visible inspiration of power and energy, the intense emotions of an agitated audience—all these evaporate in the transcript, and their absence is but ill supplied by the cold frost-work of mere verbal ornament. The difference between a speech spoken and written is the difference between a classic temple contemplated in solitude, and the same blazing with a thousand lights, and all the accompaniments of sacrificial splendour. We lose half the power that gives invective its terrible fierceness, irony its bitter coolness, and flattery its exquisite skilfulness. We have the body without the vital spirit that informed it.

Lord Plunkett and the Chief are the two great columns that remain of the national temple. They have often been compared although the points of difference are much more numerous than those of resemblance. The severe and rigid intellectual structure of the one is as far removed as possible from the Attic elegance and refinement of the other. In his best days Lord Plunkett possessed a simple and native grandeur in oratory, which was wholly unequalled at the bar or in the senate. He was eminent for the unlaboured clearness and closeness of his reasoning—for the unadorned purity of his style and manner, and the general soundness and elevation of his opinions. Nervous, collected, and deliberate, he never sank into tameness, or swelled into bombast. In weight and vigour of argumentation he had no rivals. His was that 'cunning juncture,' which when applied to mere diction is a skilful auxiliary, but which rises into the sphere of oratorical excellence when directed to the more important task of selecting, marshalling, and harmonizing the topics belonging to the subject. He was deficient in what may be called the poetic parts of oratory—splendour of imagination and richness of sentiment. In display of invention, in fertility of matter, and in variety of argument, his resources were always great, but he rarely soared; like the ostrich, his wings assisted him rather in running than flying. The Chief-justice, on the other hand, was copious, vivid, and glittering—he excelled in a sonorous and lofty declamation, which filled the ear as well as the mind. His magnificent rhetoric made a quicker impression, but did not last so long. He persuaded you—Plunkett convinced you; he appealed more powerfully to the passions—Plunkett to the understanding. With a taste the most refined, and adorned by all the graces of polite literature, he surpassed the other in the harmonious structure of his periods, and in giving those beautiful turns to thought which are amongst the happiest effects of oratorical as well as poetic skill. He was the Rubens of eloquence: let him only have the line of the procession, and there was no limit to the magnificent drapery and colours in which he could array

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it. Less vehement than Plunkett, he was more tender and subduing; less profound, he was more splendid; and with fewer striking reflections on particular circumstances, he had a larger display of general principles. Uniformly fascinating and impressive, he was as far removed from the ostentatious parade of a frigid rhetoric, as from the rude energy of tempestuous passion; and if he did not abound in the mighty bursts and flashes which constitute the real sublime of eloquence, he had all the variety and warmth and softness that constitute its beauty. A prejudice has long existed in England against our more bold and figurative style of speaking—a feeling which has acquired some support from the circumstance, that the specimens we exported gave colour to the accusation. Irish oratory passes current for fireless and vapid declamation, rising perpetually into bombast, and never chastened by the control of a sound taste. Its characteristics, to borrow the language of a leading authority in depreciation, consist in great force of imagination, without any regularity or restraint; great copiousness of language, with little selection or propriety; vehemence of sentiment, often out of place; warmth of feeling, generally overdone; a frequent substitution of jingling words for ideas; and such a defect in skill as may be supposed to result from the intemperate love of luxuriant declamation, to which all higher considerations are sacrificed. Whatever may be the defects of our orators—we speak, of course, of 'those lights of the world and demigods of fame' whose genius has given a peculiar character to our eloquence—to not one does this catalogue of faults apply. No man of ordinary understanding will be so silly as to assert, that Grattan, or Plunkett, or Bushe, had great imagination without any control, or copiousness of language without any selection. This emanation of individual envy has no foundation whatever in fact, and the propagation of such opinions has had a most pernicious effect on the style of English eloquence. We hear much about the supremacy of reason in a modern parliamentary audience;—that it is guided more by judgment than susceptibility of feeling, and to be vanquished rather by the weapons of argumentative than impassioned speaking. But this sacrifice of the lofty parts of eloquence has been carried too far, and we see its just fruits in the dull prosaic tameness which stamps the debates of the House of Commons. Imagination is refused all privilege of parliament, and all figures are carefully excluded save those of the counting-house.

The Chief was one of the ablest advocates that ever appeared in Ireland. With a jury he was irresistible, so that Plunkett once said of him that '*he charmed a verdict from the jury by the silent witchcraft of his look.*' There was more truth, however, in Counsellor O'Doherty's account to Sir Robert Peel—that 'Mr. Bushe first butthered 'em, and then sliddered 'em down.' This arose from his infinite art, his knowledge of human nature, and of the readiest access to the avenues of the human heart. His cross-examination was perfect: a rogue had no escape—he was at once turned inside out in half-a-dozen raking questions, or led on with the most unsuspecting incredulity to his utter ruin. But with all his acknowledged power, he was never unnecessarily offensive. The gentleman was never merged in the advocate, the salutary license of counsel was never carried beyond its just and proper limits, and, in his most impassioned and eager moments, he never forgot what was due to his own personal dignity and the honour of the profession. He left to others the unclean work, and reached the ends they sought by pursuing a wholly different course. Before twelve men he was omnipotent, whether we consider his masterly elocution, his unequalled address, his rare and peculiar tact in escaping from difficulties which seemed insuperable to all but himself, and in the unexpected turn he gave to points which appeared to damage irrecoverably the cause of his client. In cases of seduction or the like—wherever stirring appeals to the feelings were to be employed—he was always retained, and no advocate of his time obtained so many verdicts. In seriousness or humour, he was alike powerful. In the latter department, his speech on the trial of Mansergh *v.* Hacket, for crim con., was a master-piece. The pleasantry of the following passage is, perhaps, a little too broad, but it seems to us exquisite.

'Permit me, gentlemen of the jury, like Hamlet in the play, to present you the reverse of the portraits which have been drawn of this husband and his mate—or, to quit the style of metaphor, which does not so well become the language of truth, let me tell you, in a few words, what are the facts. Lucretia, stripped of her Roman garb, turned to be neither more nor less than Miss Shields, of whose talents and accomplishments you have *heard* so much, and of whom you are just going to see a little. Possessed, as we are informed, of every virtue, we cannot suppose her deficient in *prudence*, the parent of the whole moral tribe, and of this she gave an early and striking proof. Finding her person of marriageable age, and feeling herself little disposed to celibacy, she yet thought it prudent, before she entered on the awful state of matrimony, to see how she would like it, and, by "taking earnest of a spouse," to know by anticipation what were to be its consequences. She made the experiment, and liked it, and her marriage with Mr. Mansergh followed. Too liberal in her temper to confine her favours, and a *philanthropist* in the most extensive meaning of the term, it would require a greater combination of the powers of memory and lungs than I am blessed with to give you a list of the individuals who have been honoured by her embraces. I shall reduce them under certain general heads;—the *navy*, the *army*, the *bar*, and the *pulpit*, have paid homage to her

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charms. And such was the admirable congeniality of temper between her and her mate, that he exulted in her triumphs—boasted of her success; and when he beheld a hoary divine tottering at the tail of her conscripts, has been heard, at the edifying spectacle, to ejaculate, in a strain of religious enthusiasm, "Praise be to heaven—I have got the grace of God in my train." Children were the natural consequence of this *diffusive* intercourse with the great world, and that they were *her own children* is certain, but further the most zealous of her deponents sayeth not.—

> Though troops of heroes did attend
> Her couchée and her levée,
> The piebald breed was never owned
> By light horse or by heavy.'

One of the greatest of his efforts is not reported; it was the case of M'Naghten. He was a magistrate of Antrim, and seduced a country girl. When about to lie-in, she applied to him for a little money, which he not only refused, but, on some slight pretence, ordered her to be scourged through the town. While under the torture she was seized with the throes of labour, and died in a short time after having given birth to a still-born child. An account of this horrid proceeding was published, and the magistrate prosecuted the writer for a libel. Plunkett was retained by the plaintiff, Bushe by the defendant. He had an ample field, and he worked it well. If we may judge of the whole by one singularly beautiful sentence, which is all that remains, it must have been a speech of rare splendour. The case for the plaintiff was so managed, that Plunkett had the reply. Bushe, in cautioning the jury against his influence, said: 'Mighty as the powers of my honourable friend are, here, at least, they are impotent. *I array his heart against his head, and like the patriarch wrestling with the angel, I doubt not the victory.*'

He excelled in the skilful parts of advocacy—in the nice poise of his expressions—in concealing the weaker, or bringing forward the stronger points of his subject with artist-like skill—in approaching danger, and yet so dexterously keeping clear of it—and in seeming to say so much, whilst he really told so little. He always prepared his speeches when the matter was of moment; but the best prepared and most cautious speaker is often forced to travel out of the studied record, from the excitement of his own feelings, or the spring of fresh emergencies. The Chief was often hurried away by the storm he had himself created, but then he was gifted with that last and greatest attainment of the rhetorical art—that of fusing the extemporaneous with the prepared parts, and so harmonizing the entire, as to make the transition from one to the other imperceptible even to the most experienced eye. While at the bar, it is said that he was more distinguished as an advocate than a lawyer. Be this true, or be it false, it is now universally agreed, that an abler judge than the Chief-justice never presided in a court of common law. In giving judgment he was singularly perspicuous—arranging in the clearest order all the facts and arguments of the case. No matter how confused and entangled the statement—how complicated and perplexed by the ingenuity of counsel—he reduced the chaotic materials simply and luminously, weighing carefully every point of importance, and assigning it its proper value. There was no unnecessary amplification, no superfluous reasoning, no cumbersome citation of cases. His reference to reports was sparing; not that authority had not always due weight with him, but because he relied with dignified firmness on his judgment, and never sought refuge behind a great name to advance opinions which he feared to declare himself. He is not, also, over-fond of the multiplicity of modern reports—of that *multorum camelorum onus* which is daily pressed into the service of the law. If the lawyers in the time of Justinian complained of the 'burthen of many camels' which composed the treatises on the civil law, how would they have complained now, when a whole Mecca caravan would be insufficient for their transportation? The Chief is one of those old-fashioned doctors of the law, who think that reports at the present day intolerably augment the labour and torment the inquiry of the practitioner; that they overlay whatever is sound and useful, and discourage the acquisition of scientific knowledge, by substituting the empirical recollection of facts for the more beneficial study of principle; that they perpetuate and give a sanction to whatever errors may be accidentally committed, and render their extirpation more difficult by investing them with the solemnity of judicial approval.

The smart sayings and bon-mots of the Chief were once as plentiful as law points in the Four Courts, where he went about scattering his wisdom or his wit in every quarter. Speaking of the postponement of the Catholic claims in 1808, he said, '*Toleration never had a present time, nor taxation a future one*'—a deep and eloquent maxim. On another occasion, when conversing with a determined place-hunter and supporter of a past government—'Profligacy is so extreme in public men, that I doubt not politicians may be found, who would for years postpone all remedies for a *pestilence*, if the preservation of their places depended on the propagation of the *virus*.' But it was for his keen and polished wit, a faculty in which none surpassed him, and which all found to be irresistible, that he was most remarkable. This relieved the weary, calmed the angry, and animated the drowsy; it drew smiles even from the objects of it, and gave a spirit and freshness to the dullest and least interesting cause. When Plunkett once concluded a powerful argument in the King's Bench, a barrister who sat beside the Chief

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observed, that only for the eloquence he would as soon listen to Mr.———. 'That,' said he, 'reminds me of the Irishman's argument in favour of whiskey—"If it warn't for the hops and the malt, I'd as soon drink ditch-water as porter."' His numerous sallies would fill a volume, but we shall only give the last in circulation in the Four Courts—it is an excellent morsel for a crusty lawyer—Lord Coke would have delighted in it. Judge ———, who, unlike the Chief, has adjured all generous potations, made a tour in Germany some time ago. Baron ——— asked the Chief what his brother had been doing in Germany? 'Merely,' chuckled the Chief, 'making the *traverse absque hoc(k)*.'

To his powers of conversation all submit. With a powerful memory, which years have not in the least impaired; with a mind stored with various knowledge, and abounding in anecdotes of rare interest of men and events of past times; with a humour arch and racy, but never bitter; with an unclouded gaiety of disposition—his conversation has a charm in the highest degree fascinating and attractive. With such colloquial powers, his superiority in society was never felt but in the instruction he imparted, in the wit with which he irradiated a subject, or, what is more rare, in the attention with which his generous preference was always directed to the more obscure members of the company. He has a gentleness of character which flies from everything partaking of the rude, boisterous, or offensive, and, to use his own forcible language in his eulogy of Richard Power, 'he would shrink from giving pain with the same instinct that men shrink from suffering it.' No human being was ever more free from the least taint of malignity, falsehood, or vanity. It is truly delightful to witness his demeanour on the bench;—kind, placid, and cheerful, he listens with patience when it almost ceases to be a virtue. He strictly followed the advice of Bacon, 'not to affect expedition by an impatient and catching hearing of the counsellors at the bar.' If a quiet hint that the argument would not lose by curtailment failed of effect, he yields to his unhappy destiny, not, however, without a significant cough from time to time, the meaning of which is well understood. By the juniors he is looked on as their father. That earnest attention which the senior often fails to arrest, is always held forth to the timid junior. He leans over the bench, nods approval, and calms the quaking nerves of the young practitioner by words of favour and encouragement.

Our memoir is now drawn to a close. The Chief has expressed a desire to retire from the bench. It is almost time, for the sake of his own repose. He has nobly fulfilled his mission; and we may say without contradiction, that it will be difficult indeed to find his equal, in commanding talent, in high personal character, in public virtue, and in private worth. The fine panegyric of Lord Mansfield on Lord Hardwicke is strictly applicable to Chief-justice Bushe—'It is the peculiar felicity of the great man I am speaking of, to have presided very near twenty years, and to have shone with a splendour that has risen superior to faction, and has subdued envy.'

ODE FOR THE NEW YEAR.

BY MAJOR CALDER CAMPBELL.

I.

Time hath an equal step, nor fast, nor slow,
As Grief or Joy illusive think!
Whene'er of woe
Or bliss from life's drugged cup we drink,
Time seems a tardier, quicker pace to go;
'Tis seeming all!—The age that thins men's blood,
And turns dark hair to grey,
Denotes the sway
Of time, but changeth not the progress of its flood.
Men come, and disappear,
Through each revolving year,
Before regardless eyes;
We meet with welcoming hands, and weep
At parting, with resistless sighs,
For deaths—that bring no sleep;
But Time looks on, unaltered still,
On every scene of black or green,
Careless if this be good, careless if that be ill!

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II.

Time and Creation are coeval! Life
Begnn, and with it pain, that lasteth thro'
All seasons—privilege of man, whose due
(Purchased by sin) is punishment and strife!
'Twas disobedience edged the murderer's knife.
'Twas disobedience plucked the fruit, which grew
Heavily fraught with fate; and fratricide
By drunkenness was followed,—and the dew
Of grapy clusters led to lust, and pride,
That liveth aye, and buildeth Babels new
The mocking earth eftsoones with dust to strew,
While mad Confusion learns aloud to chide,
And ruin reigns around. With life and time
Came man! With sin came death! With Jesus bliss sublime!

III.

Another year, another month, week, day,
Another hour, begin
To gather garlands in,
Wherewith the changing track of time to strew;—
The purple rose for love, for hate the sombre yew,—
The cypress for decay!
The world is as it e'er hath been—the Past
Is born again; the Present hath amassed
The Future in its lap. Bells toll the knell
Of death for some, and merry carols swell
For others' bridal bliss!
Airs of health
Are breathed for *those*—and, fraught with wealth,
Do jocund ships the waters kiss;
While *these* still meet
Disease in every blast—in every bark a winding-sheet!

IV.

Oh! New-born Year! be thou to England giver
Of many a glorious gift! Be thou to her
A bounteous, never-failing mountain-river,
That cannot err,
Nor stint its treasures, nor its progress slacken,—
Nor swerve aside, nor recklessly awaken
Fresh sources, that may grow to fearful floods,
Destroying woods,
And making green fields brown;
And turning eared gold
Where sheafy corn is grown,
To marshy mosses cold,
While Want from Hunger learns the bandit's deadly frown!—
Oh! Newborn year!
Be thou to England full of gladsomenesses
And pleasures pure and dear,—
That so, when o'er thee pale descendeth Time's dark veil,
The hearts of Englishmen—with praise that blesses,
And hymns of gratitude
That stir to holy joy the blood,
Shall to thy memory cling,—hoping to see
Thy likeness in the years that are to be!

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RECOLLECTIONS OF A STUDENT.

THE CRIMES OF A 'GOOD MAN.'

"Nicht der Hochmuth, nicht die Eigenliebe,
Nein! Vom Himmel eingepflanzte Triebe;
Lehren Tugend, und das ihre Krone,
Selbst sie belohne!
HALLER.

It is not pride of heart nor self-applause,
But heaven-implanted conscience, that we feel,
Which shows us virtue's never-changing laws
Her lofty self-rewarding crown reveal!

In a lonely valley on the banks of the Neckar, replete with all the beauties of nature, there so beautiful, but on this spot of a character sad and even sombre, rose an unpretending ancient manor-house. It was of simple structure, but massive, and bore the impress of antiquity. Its mouldering walls were grey, its ivied turrets green, rising above it, like Hope upon a grave-stone. There was no porch, no castellated tower, with shattered battlements telling of past wars. Through a low-arched door-way you entered the solemn hall; on its rafiered roof no storied tale, on its antique walls no knightly blazonment, but the dark-green pines that waved against the windows hung that silent chamber with an arras of shadow.

Within it dwelt a greyhaired, pale old man, who seemed bent with cares, and still to smile beneath them. He was quiet and unpretending, like his dwelling; yet he had a pleasing solemnity, a winning pensiveness, that made you feel his friend from the moment you beheld him. He was an uncle of Issendorff; thence I knew him, and, accompanied by my unfortunate friend, I often strolled to that old man's dwelling, and passed away many an evening hour most pleasantly, and yet I scarce knew how.

Issendorff sometimes revealed to him the difficulties of his situation, and always left him comforted by his advice, which, though so good, he could not follow.

One evening we found the old man more melancholy than usual; he received us with a sadder smile, and with a warmer welcome. He looked paler than his wont—his brow white as the hair that clung around. How beautiful are the silver locks of age! They look like a halo. It is as though the spirit, drawing so near to heaven, was already brightening with its glory.

We entered the ancient hall. Though it was a cold evening of autumn the fire had expired on the hearth, and its large and gloomy space yawned like a grave. The leaves fell from the trees, and the gusty wind whirled them against the casement, like the tapping of fingers. I could scarcely forbear deeming it was a spirit calling that old man away from his fireless hearth and his gloomy house.

'Issendorff!' he exclaimed; 'I am going!'

'Where?'

'Where!' His voice sank and his eye quailed. 'I know not; but 'tis to a land whence none return.'

'I hope you will be spared us many years longer, dear uncle. This is but a passing fancy—you must cheer up. And if you *were*, why fear? The good all go to heaven.'

'I hoped for heaven once; but now I dare not!'

'And why? All mortals are sinful, but you are the best of all I know. All who speak of you call you the good Count Danneberg.'

'I know they do—and so I thought myself. I believed I had never committed a crime. I searched my own actions, and was convinced I had not. And now—O God!'

'Issendorff looked at me in amaze. 'Uncle!' he exclaimed; 'let us replenish the fire, and wheel round your arm-chair.'

'No! no!' cried the old man with gasping energy; 'the fire in my heart is going out, and there shall be none on my hearth. Oh! it is cold—very cold! and so cheerless, within and without!'

Thinking that the paroxysm would pass away, and that it was only the weakness of age, we noticed him not, dear as he was to us, but began to converse on the affairs of my friend, which at that time already assumed a hopeless hue.

Seeing he was not attended to, the old man burst into tears.

'Thus it is!' he exclaimed. 'Once I was young and strong in body and intellect—all gathered round me, and sought me, and now that I am weak, perchance in both, they leave me alone, and I may die, without any one to close my eyes, and speak comfort to my departing soul.'

'Not so, dear uncle!' cried Issendorff; 'we are near you still, and we will not leave you. Cheer up! there are still many bright days in store for you. But, alas! poor old man! you are not more deserted, more unhappy than I, and I am yet so young.'

'Then you are truly happy. Feel sorrow young, and you will die happy—the deathbed of the unfortunate is easy. But my life has not been one of happiness, though I always thought a good one; and yet I die in agony. Alas! how vain are our good intentions! How little can we rely upon the strength of human wisdom! O listen to me, Issendorff—and you, my young friend; now about entering life, you have, no doubt, your high aspirations, your noble plans. It is well; cherish them, they may lead to good; but *mistrust them;* weigh well every action before you commit it—yea, even *every word!* Wait, my children—I see a tempest coming across the mountains. You cannot go home yet, therefore spend the evening with me, and I will reveal to you the cause of my sufferings, and of my unavailing and too long delayed repentance.'

He ceased, and, apparently exhausted, sank back in his arm-chair. Issendorff walked to the window and opened it, and in

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truth a faint gleam of lightning flickered against the casement, and partially lit the walls, gleaming on the time-silvered head of our venerable host. The dead leaves awoke from their rest, and rustled without, and the low wailing wind that precedes a storm crept among the long withered grass. Dun clouds glided between the mountains, and a muttering of thunder was distinctly audible. The air was keen with frost, making a thunderstorm, at that time of the year, the more surprising. It was evidently coming fast over Heidelberg, that lay a dark mass in the distance.

A sudden gust arose, and a loud peal of thunder rattled over head, casting its fire athwart the old tower of the far-famed castle. Issendorff shut the casement, and turned away, for suddenly the old man moved and bent down to the ground, crying in anguish—

'Oh! hark! hark! how the Eternal chides —see how his eye lightens upon me!— see how his almighty anger rolls aloft! And I am called hence, and must meet him in his wrath! What if I die to-night! See there is a hell in the sky!'

We shuddered, for an awful expression dwelt in the countenance of Danneberg. It was appalling to behold him suddenly raise his time-bent form and stand before us with all the vigour of youth. There was a majesty in him, but it was that of the spirit. His eye shone forth with an unearthly light, but his body seemed wasting before the fire of his soul.

For a time we did not venture to speak; we felt that we dared not intrude a commonplace word upon his thoughts. We were awed in the double presence of the angry storm without, and that sorrowing man within. The flashes came fast and thick; every moment the thunder pealed louder, and every moment his anguish seemed to increase. Never shall I forget the countenance with which he gazed upon the clouds. A dreadful thought seemed raging within him, but at length he grew calmer, reseated himself, and motioning us to his side, began thus:—

'I need no prelude to what I am about to relate. You may think me insane, but I am not; though the sudden conviction that he has committed endless crimes, forced upon a man who thought his life exemplary, were enough to goad to madness in the hour of death. Speak not! I know what you would say, but I reveal the truth! Thus has my life been, and it is now on the point of ending.'

In truth, we saw that the state of excitement under which he was labouring could not be sustained long, and that it was the last flickering of the lamp ere it expired. With feelings moved to agony, we listened. The count resumed:—

'Yesternight I was sitting alone on this same spot, by the expiring embers of my hearth. All was quiet in the house and without. The very air seemed dead, and hung heavy in the room. All was silent as thought. The walls looked bare and blank, the lamp burned dim, and I felt cheerless. Suddenly a strange feeling came over me—a feeling of impending death; it was indescribable; a bodily chill and a foreboding in the spirit, that weighed me down. I looked around with a shudder, for one would feel thus if Satan had entered the room. I cannot tell why, but I knew that it was the dreadful warning, the first precursor of death! I never felt so before. I am a careworn man, but my cares sat lightly on me, for they were mere worldly misfortunes; loss of friends, and wealth, and rank, and disappointments. I had grieved for them, but I had never felt thus!

'I tried to comfort myself by looking over my past life. Oh! it was a difficult task! It was like commencing a long journey, when one is tired to death. But I *did* begin it, and sought comfort in the retrospection. All my actions I had modelled according to what men considered the laws of *right*. I had always been an enthusiast for the good and the noble; if ever a mortal was faultless, I had deemed *myself* such. Had I not suffered for the good of my fellow-creatures —had I not undergone misery and privation to serve them? Was I not *justified* in hoping for comfort in the retrospection? What good must I not have done?

'Thus I said to myself, aloud, as one who fears to be alone, but there was a lurking consciousness of evil. I paused.—Good heaven! I heard a still small voice answer me! Fearfully it stole on the silence of the chamber. That voice was most strange; it was so low I scarce could hear it, and yet every word thrilled deeper than this thunder. I listened, and lo! the voice came from *within me*. Still I continued to speak, and still it answered me, in that low, whispered, awful tone. It came from the depth of my heart, and I felt it was the voice of God!

'The consciousness of my past actions now came over me. But the path that my memory would have traced was not the one that I was permitted to follow. I began with what I considered the first main action of my life, one that I had thought would alone entitle me to eternal reward; that dreadful voice stopped me. "That is not thy first *sin*," it breathed; "thy catalogue of *crime* begins far sooner! Recollect! one evening in long past years, you met Dietrich Schaffner; he was very young at the time, and his fiery imagination easily impressed. You conversed with him, and the theme was *God*. Did I not then whisper close to your heart, 'Forbear! it is not well done to speak lightly on serious theme, to one so wild of thought!'—you conversed on all the different codes and sects, and compared their relative merits; but it was more satire than discussion. Fate and the free agency of man became your subject. You said in conclusion: 'We claim the possession of a free, unfettered soul, and yet dare not venture to act for ourselves, but suffer our actions, nay,

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our thoughts to be ruled visionary laws. How must the eternal spirit smile at us! do you not feel humiliated before them? For my part, I would break from such puerile guidance, if I thought I were a plaything in the hands of fate, for I feel, and so must every man, an immortal power within me, that can think and act for itself. Why bow without inquiry to the quaint fancies of visionary minds, clothed with the names of moral and religion? These sacred names are easily applied to any tenet.' These were thy words."

'I could not deny them, but I had spoken them without an evil intent. I had wished to assert the sovereignty of the human will, but I had not thought that I was committing evil.

'"These words," continued the voice, "laid the train of thought; they sank deep into the mind of thy young listener—they ruled the actions of his after life; he became *self-confident*, thence reckless, fierce, and proud. He died an outcast upon a scaffold, and thou art the cause."

'I shuddered and bowed down, for the weight as of a world rushed over my heart. Is it thus I have acted? Then am I indeed unblest! Are actions I scarce heeded at the time—words I did not recollect for an hour, of such fearful importance? At once I was dashed from the pinnacle of self-applause into the lowest gulf of despondency. With a feeling of unutterable woe, I tried to wave away the visions of my Past, and to silence that dreadful voice: but the more I strove the thicker they thronged around me, and the tones of that awful monitor loudened to a thunder!—

'Oh! I cannot tell the feeling of utter wretchedness that seized me or the chill of horror that I felt, as recollection after recollection rushed across my mind.

'I will not, cannot dwell on them, though they are burnt in characters of fire on my brain. Merciful heaven! strike me not yet with those bolts! I am unprepared!'

The Count gazed at the lightnings, that now thronged thick and lurid in the sky, like the fancies of an evil heart. A darkness hung around, save where those fires melted downward from heaven, like burning ore, and the trembling voice of that wretched man came low and hollow as of one in the grave.

'My next crime,' he continued, 'consisted in an action that I thought one of my most meritorious. I had joined an army of patriots—where I will not say, for many of the first in our land are implicated in the event—it was in a far distant country. Brilliant victories crowned our endeavours for a time; then we were beaten by overwhelming force. A scanty band, which I commanded, still remained; some of the loftiest of the realm were in the number, and the noblest hearts that ever beat to battle. Resistance was hopeless, and retreat was open—they might have all been saved. Many would not have been suspected, most would have been pardoned and attained happy years, surrounded by those they love; but I advanced before them.

'"Comrades!" I cried, "the way for flight is free, but freer is the road to glory! Your country demands a sacrifice, let us not survive its liberties, but seal them with our blood. I call on you all to die for your cause. A brighter flame will arise from our grave than we could ever kindle in a lengthened life!"

'I thought this heroism—it may have been, but even at that moment I heard a voice within me. I heeded it not, for I knew it not. I saw by the pale quivering lip, and the gleaming eye of the doomed soldiers, that the smiles and tears of those they loved, of parents, wives and children—the bereft, the widow, the orphan, were present to their thoughts. I saw that recollections rolled over them, and half unnerved; the bright memories of childhood and its promises.

'I felt, as it were, a remorse for what I had said; but then I reasoned thus: Private feelings must yield to public good; the country commands the sacrifice. Do I not share the same fate? But the broken hearts at home! Away, unmanly fancies! Be the spirit brave, and drink the cup of glory, though the draught be death! I saw they wavered, I saw many thought of those they loved, and half sheathed the sword—"Onward!" I cried. "If none will follow me to death, I go alone!"

'Forth from its scabbard, as lightning from the cloud, leaped every blade, and lifting it above him, each soldier swore to die by my side. The foe came down, and every one of my valiant band was slain. I fought bravely, may heroically. An old man, woe-stricken, on the brink of doom, says it, and curses himself for having done so. They perished. I was taken prisoner and escaped soon afterwards. I always thought this one of the proudest and brightest actions of my life—but yesternight the hand of God unveiled the awful secret. I was a murderer a thousand fold; and methought I heard in the dreadful silence of the midnight the beating of the hearts I had broken.

'The people obtained their liberty afterwards, by foreign interposition, and the bootless sacrifice of so many valiant hearts is scarce known or recorded. Oh! listen not to the call of false glory, for its halo is a wildfire on a grave, and its laurel is a weed from hell.

* * * *

'The Count Waldren was my true and dear friend; he had stood by me in many dangers, he had aided me in many undertakings. I owed him a debt of gratitude, and tried to repay it. He was noble and wealthy, and did not want assistance, but Providence gave me the power to render him a service.

'Large possessions and lordly castles were enjoyed by a young and distant relative of the count, but my friend said he had a right and laid claim to them; they formed almost the only property of his competitor, Sigis-

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mund of Seedorff, who without them would become a comparative beggar.

'Sigismund was on the point of being united to a noble and beautiful lady; they loved each other tenderly. I knew it. Chance threw it into my power to render such evidence as caused my friend to gain the lawsuit—but the day before the last hearing of the case, Sigismund Seedorff came to me.

'"I know," he exclaimed, "that you can make your friend gain the contested property. He is rich already, and does not want it, I shall be a beggar, and Henrietta's father will withhold his consent to her marriage with the landless outcast. The ruin of two hearts, *mayhap souls*, will be your deed!"

'"Your argument, sir, is powerful," I replied, "but it is useless. My conscience can never reproach me for doing that which is right; let every man have *his right;* and it behoves every individual to do as much as lays in his power to accomplish so desirable a result. If such were the case, the earth would become a paradise. If the property belongs by right to you, it will be yours, for no subterfuge is used, and the judges are strictly honourable: you cannot deny that this is fair!"

'"I do not; but is it merciful? It is just before man—is it so before God? Supposing your friend to have a legal right—he is rich, but I shall become poor. I care not for myself—but—" and his voice faltered—"there are other hearts will break!"

'I felt the appeal: something prompted me to yield. But alas! I reasoned—that bane of the soul—I reasoned with *worldly reasoning*. Were it not joining in a conspiracy against my friend? My evidence would decide the case; or if I withheld, would place the antagonists in an equal position,—should I withhold it? No! The stoic mind, the duty of friendship, the debt of gratitude—all forbade: and after the maturest consideration I decided upon supporting the cause of Count Waldren. I felt convinced I was fulfilling the dictates of earth's noblest feeling—friendship. My heart beat proudly at the thought. On the morrow I repaired to the court of justice; several little incidents combined to warn me away. Was it the hand of God? does Providence give us these signs to guide us in our actions, as conscience does in our thoughts? Yea, it doth.

'Upon *my* evidence Count Waldren gained his cause. The court was crowded to excess; Sigismund pleaded nobly—touchingly. He gazed upon me as I advanced with a look of appeal I can never forget. I felt it, but I would not heed it. He heard his doom with a smile, as one prepared, and with a haughty, measured step he left the hall.

'I know not what impelled me, on that evening, to wander down to the lordly domain in which still dwelt Sigismund. A space of eight days was allowed him, within which it must be resigned, and immediately upon hearing the decision he had repaired to his castle of Seedorff.

'The night had already begun to close, when, following one of those mysterious impulses which so often arise within us, I entered the lordly but deserted gate of the vast domain. The moonlight watched over it, and that was the only sentinel, for the guards had left. The bonds of obedience to him, who was whilome lord of Seedorff, were broken, and the proud descendant of unnumbered ancestors was no longer master in his own domain. As I proceeded down the stately avenue, I perceived some one before me walking at a slow and thoughtful pace—it was Sigismund. I drew back; but, I knew not why, I could not refrain from following him at a distance. He advanced slowly beneath those venerable elms, and gazed around him with a pale and placid brow, as one with a breaking heart taking a last but calm farewell of dear familiar scenes. He wandered long and far around his ancient park; at length he returned to the terrace of the castle, and then, taking some object from his breast, gazed on it intently, alternately glancing at that and at the lordly towers departing from his sway. I since learned it was the miniature of Henrietta. He knew (he had told me) she was now lost to him—irrevocably lost.

'Long and immoveably Sigismund stood in that thoughtful attitude, then turning slowly away, entered the portal and closed it behind him, as though shutting out the world. I heard his step ascending the marble staircase, I heard it reverberate in the vaulted hall, and every echo seemed to fall upon my heart. I felt as a midnight robber, intruding thus upon the sacred solitude of another's home; but an indefinable feeling forced me to remain. I stood gazing intently on the majestic and beautiful pile before me, that rose surrounded by solitude, silence, and moonlight.

'A window at this moment opened in a lofty tower, and I beheld Sigismund leaning his last adieu to his dear-loved home. It was closed; the night wore; and still, as by a charm, I stood rivetted to the spot. After a time, a faint red gleam leaped against the casement, and a shot reverberated within the castle. Instinctively I knew the cause. I was motionless with horror; and as I stood thus, methought I heard an echo of that sound in the heavens above me, and a feeling came over me that it was the registry of that deed against me before the throne of God. A consciousness of evil and a remorse seized me, but I soon dispelled it:—the deed is on *his* head, I reasoned. Poor unhappy man! to peril his soul for earthly baubles!—*I* have done my *duty*. I rushed to the castle, and alarmed the household: my fears were true—assistance was vain.

* * * * *

'It was in the midst of gaiety, at the board of my grateful friend, that I heard of the death of Henrietta. They said she had died

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of a decline—her malady was a broken heart. Although I had never seen her, I was truly grieved, but I applauded myself, notwithstanding, for what I had done. I had followed the dictates of friendship to the utmost; I had fulfilled the laws of honour, and not deviated from that path which the most mature consideration pronounced "*the right.*" But yesternight the spirit of God forced upon me the dreadful conviction that I had erred—nay, more, that I had sinned a fearful sin, for I had stifled the voice of the eternal truth, and followed the dictates of human wisdom where the finger of the Deity pointed to "*the right.*" '

The old count paused. Was it exhaustion?—was it death? He seemed outspent; but his eyes were still fixed upon the storm, that rolled with unabated fury aloft. He roused himself from his death-like stupor with more than mortal energy.

'The storm is not yet over! We will depart together!' he cried, in an impassioned tone. 'But my duty is as yet unfinished; I must proceed,' he resumed, in a cold, sepulchral voice, as one reciting a task. He spoke of the dearest the best hopes of his life, in the same cold, indifferent manner. It showed that already he felt belonging no more to earth and earthly feelings; his heart had died within him, and his soul still lingered around it, like a spirit around a tomb.

'I have loved,' continued the spirit-broken mourner, 'and Agatha deserved a better destiny than to be linked to me. She inclined towards Gerhard Von Stadelnberg; but the heart is weak, and she became mine! Her deserted suitor left the country;—we thought no more of him! My lot became one of hardship. Agatha pined and died in the icy north, and I was left with a cloud upon the sunshine of my life. Yet *I never accused myself*—I sooner murmured against what I deemed the harsh decrees of Providence. But yesternight the curtain was lifted from before a scene in the past. The self-exiled Gerhard fell in battle, a victim of my selfishness, and the shadow I had cast upon the life of Agatha falls coldly between me and the glory of heaven. Yet I had never one moment regretted having won her heart, never one moment held myself responsible for Gerhard's exile and end, or Agatha's sufferings and death! Alas! I have perverted the innocent mind—murdered the brave—brought ruin to families—broken noble hearts—and destroyed those I loved best! while I thought myself performing the most laudable actions and harbouring the most excellent intentions, while all who knew me deemed me one of the best of men.'

Thus far the count had spoken in the same cold voice. He paused, and seemed struggling with his feelings.

'Do you *now* wonder that I should have no hope? or that even madness should burn in my brain?' he burst forth, with the tone of a maniac. 'Dashed at once from my height of happiness—the strength of self-reliance! O mercy! mercy! my spirit is departing; I feel it ebbing;—it is passing away from the earth, but the storm is above, and it cannot ascend to heaven, for a lightning will strike it from its path, and hurl it into the fires of the eternal gulf. O save me! save me! See how those lights burn aloft! It is the eye of God, kindling and flashing in anger;—it is fixed upon me, and I perish!'

We were horror-stricken. Count Danneberg fell back as one dashed to the ground, and remained motionless. At first we thought that in truth a levin bolt had struck him, for the thunder pealed with an awful burst—the walls tottered beneath the overwhelming sound.

'He is dead!' whispered Issendorff; 'his heart beats no longer.'

We knelt by the side of the prostrate form;—it breathed not;—I cannot describe our feelings.

The storm sunk with a sudden hush, and its retiring lightnings played distinctly across the towers of Heidelberg; still the old man remained motionless as the dead. The moon came forth, and laid its light upon his brow, like the hand of a saint imparting a blessing.

Was it fancy? A smile appeared to steal over his lips, and his countenance to grow more calm. It seemed as though he was being reconciled with his God. And in truth it might be thus; for the misfortunes he caused were not the result of evil intention, but of error. Do they not show that, mistrusting the sophistry of the mind, and the wisdom of the world, we must keep watch above our words and our actions?

Slowly the dying man reopened his eyes, and gazed upon us.

'I am forgiven!' he breathed. 'There is endless mercy in heaven!'

His eyes still dwelt upon us calmly and kindly; gradually they grew dim;— he breathed a long, deep sigh, and expired.

KARL.

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THE PRESS.

BY MRS. ABDY.

Oh! the wondrous Press has a magic sway
In its great and giant force,
To the east and west it bends its way,
And it takes o'er the seas its course;
Gay dazzling stores may the good ship fill,
In the pride of vain excess,
But it boasts a treasure more precious still,
In the wealth of the mighty Press.

The son of genius, unsought, unknown,
May his heaven-born themes pursue,
Their brightness gladdens himself alone,
For his friends are far and few.
But see, in the ranks of fame he stands,
Lo! thousands his lays possess,
And his name is blazoned in distant lands,
Through the aid of the mighty Press.

The poet's numbers, the scholar's lore,
Cast their radiant spell o'er all;
Those strains are conned in the cottage poor
That enchant the lordly hall:
And the Book more holy than all beside,
Which alone can truly bless,
To the heathen shines as a lamp and guide,
By the power of the mighty Press.

Alas! that a scene so bright, so dear,
Should a dark reverse disclose,
Alas! that a boon so great, so dear,
Should be ever linked with woes;
But the lawless doctrines of men profane,
To the world their guile address,
Proving to thousands a snare and bane,
Through the sway of the mighty Press.

Yet the summer sky has its wintry doom,
And the rose reveals a thorn,
And evil must ever mix with good
In a race to evil born;
We must bear the pangs of a thwarted will
Where we fondly hoped success,
We must sigh o'er the mass of social ill,
Diffused by the mighty Press.

Yet the light of Faith let us humbly seek
To illume our dangerous road,
Let us deem all knowledge poor and weak
That would lead our hearts from God;
Then may we welcome Instruction's tide,
As it flows our land to bless,
And greet with unmingled joy and pride
The gift of our glorious Press.

LORD KILLIKELLY.*

BY ABBOTT LEE.

CHAPTER XXXIII.

As Wickham turned into that certain court in the Temple which, for lack of a dearer and better place to bear the title, he was for the present obliged to honour with the name of home, his eye caught a glimpse of a peculiar blue livery, with yellow facings and shoulderknots, and the idea suggested itself that it certainly belonged to the Hamiltons. The phenomenon brought again to his recollection the obstinate shoe-creakings and the

* Continued from vol. x. p. 369.

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treacherous rustlings of garments which he had heard in the ante-room of that nursery and study in Belgrave Square, in which he had so recently had an audience of his beloved; and putting that and that together, he became more thoroughly convinced than before that other ears besides those of his adorable had heard all the vastly pretty things which were improvised for her amusement alone.

Wickham felt a little irritated at the supposition. Love-making to a party not concerned is the most grotesque of imagery, and the manufacturer seems to himself a mere maker of toys. Nay, he has a sort of feeling that he has even been caricaturing himself in all the inflated imagery of his passion, and this is peculiarly annoying and irritating to his self-love.

Walter Wickham's French bed that night was peculiarly ill-made; no sleep was to be got out of it; neither did any of those waking dreams of hope and expectation shed their influences over it, which sometimes gild with their sunshine the rugged things of life.

He had lately been stoutly endeavouring to cope with the troubles of his lot, and stem the tide of adversity with a courageous arm, and this manlike resolution Vernoese had had no small share of breathing into his spirit. But who has not felt, in the midst of the energy and determination which they have been valiantly practising under the pressure of real evils, their nerves all at once slacken, their courage ooze away, their spirit evaporate, leaving them more dejected and enervated, nay, more wholly overpowered, than at the first blow of their misfortunes? It was thus with Wickham. The first nauseous taste of his adversity revived upon his palate with its fullest flavour; the value of all that he had lost returned upon him with an enhanced price; and the meagreness of all that he possessed dwindled down into deprivation and poverty. His bed-room, with its creasled ceiling, its dusty walls, its cobwebbed corners, and its crippled chairs, appeared in the first blush of their deformity; and his sitting-room, with its faded, ragged, unswept carpet, its torn and tattered sofa, its shattered marble hearth, and its blinds that would hang crooked and would not draw, wore a more blood-curdling, soul-chilling aspect, than when his horror-stricken eyes first made their acquaintance. Neither were the prospects of his mental vision much more satisfactory. He had embarked in a travel through the dry and toilsome deserts of the law; had begun to tread that maze of intricacies and subtleties from which his weary feet might never more find egress; and if the desert were indeed passed over, and the labyrinth threaded, would it not be when his brow was wrinkled and his hair whitened? and where is the pleasure of success, when desire has departed?—where would be the loveliness of Arabella—and what would she be? Wickham could not help thinking that she would probably resemble her grandmother; and where would be the use of all his toil, if it promised him such a result?

With a sensation of loathing Walter pushed away his pile of fusty books, and abandoning all excursions into the future, began to explore the ramifications of the present. He thought upon Arabella, beautiful, blooming, and devoted as he had left her the previous evening; remembered that but for that most luckless exposition of heartless and senseless folly which had lost him his uncle's favour and affection, he should at that moment have been the happy husband of his adorable, with an allowance befitting the condition of Lord Killikelly's heir. Wickham thought of all this, and actually writhed under his retrospective disappointment. Luxury and love were demolished at one blow. And then meanness suggested that all was not lost; that he had only to ask and have: and all the pleadings that had fallen from his beautiful Arabella's rosy lips recurred in more than the force of their first utterance. 'Never!' exclaimed Wickham, suddenly rising from his seat, and pushing the table away with his hands, and his chair with his feet. 'Never! I have lost both mistress and fortune, but I will not buy them back again at the price of honour!'

On this magnanimous resolution Wickham determined to make himself as miserable as possible, and was just trying how far he could accomplish it in practice, when a very aristocratic-looking letter, inscribed on the finest of post, and sealed with the crest of the Hamiltons, was put into his hands.

'Well!' thought Wickham, 'I was right then in supposing that all the pretty things I said last night were poured into other ears besides those they were intended for. Now come reproaches and tirade against stolen sweets;—but no matter; it is but another of the bitter dregs of my cup, and I am getting used to the flavour.'

Wickham opened and read—

'My Dear Sir,

'A long time having now elapsed since I had last the pleasure of seeing you, I have at last determined, upon mature deliberation, to come to some explanation with you, influenced as I am by my own most sincere esteem and regard, by Mrs. Hamilton's almost maternal feeling towards you, and by the painful dread that the emotions of my daughter's heart are wearing out the framework of her body, through the medium of her acute and exquisite sensibility. Under the influence of these motives, I have determined to waive the punctilio of my position as a parent and a gentleman, and request you to explain the motives of your extraordinary conduct.

'I think that I need scarcely remind you of the warmth of our personal affection, which induced us to welcome you as a suitor to Arabella, in preference to many whose pretensions were, perhaps, higher, though they could not be put into the scale with our

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esteem and regard towards yourself. You know that things had gone so far as only to require winding up, when all of a sudden you withdrew yourself from our circle without a word of explanation. We, of course, were very bitterly wounded on the loss of your society, and that too when we expected that a very little time would have made you a member of our family. But the blow fell the heaviest upon Arabella. She was long in even acquiring a partial tranquillity, and is still suffering both in health and spirits; and it is because I cannot see her sinking into an untimely grave, that I now call upon you for explanation. Why, then, did you thus withdraw yourself? You were never banished from our house, nor from our affection. Arabella, with all the ingenuousness of her own affectionate nature, has detailed to her parents the circumstances of your last night's visit; her timidity might, in the first instance, make her shrink from the avowal, but her second impulse was to trust to our affection. We have been charmed at the generous and noble sentiments which actuated you throughout your interview, and if you will visit us this morning, we shall be very happy to consult with you, whether or not any mode is left of establishing the united and mutual happiness of yourself and our Arabella. And meanwhile believe me, &c. &c. &c.

H. A. P. Hamilton.'

Wickham read this letter once through, and, without waiting to refold it in its original form of comeliness, crushed it in his hand, crammed it into his pocket, and snatching his hat, ran rather than walked, in the most ungentlemanly hurry imaginable, as fast as limb and muscle and nerve and sinew could carry him, to Belgrave Square.

There was no appearance of Wickham being met at the door with a surly 'not at home' this time. His name was evidently on the porter's books as one of the admitted, and that, too, with a show of deference and alacrity with which Wickham had not for some time back had the pleasure of being greeted. 'After all,' thought he, 'I must have been labouring under some most injurious mistake. How could all this be? How could I injure the Hamiltons so much as to think them mercenary and time-serving? Here am I in the lowest depths of my broken fortune, and yet their hospitable doors fly open to me, and I am almost asked to accept their dearest treasure. Kind—noble—generous—disinterested!'

Thus thought Wickham as he bounded up the hall-staircase, as in his days of favour, and in a moment more found himself in the presence of Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton. He cast his eyes round the room in search of his adorable—she was not there. 'It is only delicate,' thought he 'I shall see her presently.'

He had scarcely time for these thoughts in the midst of the cordial greetings of his host and hostess. He felt himself quite intoxicated with the warmth of their welcome. So generous, so open hearted, so disinterested. Mr. Hamilton shook him cordially by the hand, and looked all frank delight. Mrs. Hamilton left her white, well-ringed fingers for a full minute and a half in his, declaring all the time that it gave her the truest, the most sincere pleasure to see him again. She had had no rest since he had forsaken them—they should all be so happy. And then Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton began to explain to him how he had been excluded, at the same time mixing up their explanation with reproaches that he had deserted them, and then laying the whole fault on their porter, for having mistaken him for somebody else, whom they had indeed excluded; for wilfully shutting their door upon him, their most cherished guest; for mistaking their order entirely, and then acting in direct opposition to them; in fact, for being an unmeasured rogue and an entire fool.

'And it is thus,' said Mrs. Hamilton, sentimentally, 'that the most intimate connections are separated, and the dearest friends divided.'

'By a parcel of heedless, profligate, worthless fellows, who are too idle to do anything but eat,' warmly taking up the strain, said Mr. Hamilton.

'The domestics of the present day,' responded Mrs. Hamilton, with a soft commiserating accent, 'are indeed highly immoral.'

'But as soon as ever we found it out, we turned the whole set of them away. I was angry. I might say I was almost in a passion; and I dismissed every one of them! a set of——'

'My dear, your feelings are so strong.'

'Strong! How can they be otherwise? Might we not have lost the dearest friend we possess?'

'O, Mr. Wickham, how could you desert us?' exclaimed Mr. Hamilton. 'Could you think whose peace you were destroying.'

'I am afraid that I thought only of my own—only of myself,' said Wickham.

'But our feelings,' said Mrs. Hamilton, deprecatingly.

'Pardon me, my dear madam.'

'And Arabella. Ah, did you think of poor Arabella?'

'Spare me, my dear Mrs. Hamilton.'

'I would not wound you for the world. I know too well what it is to have my own feelings agonized and harassed. No, Mr. Wickham, do not think that *I* would say anything to distress you?' said Mrs. Hamilton, kindly and tenderly saying everything she could think of all the while.

'It was the fault of the servants,' said Mr. Hamilton, 'but I turned them all away at a moment's notice; that was the sure way of hitting the right one. And now, my dear fellow, I am very glad to see you here again; very glad, upon my honour; and I hope nothing will ever happen again to disturb our family harmony.' And Mr. Hamilton gave Wickham another long shake of the hand.

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'And I join in that wish,' said Mrs. Hamilton, in her soft, soothing voice, 'most cordially. My dear Mr. Wickham knows how much of our hearts is in his possession.' And Mrs. Hamilton followed her husband's example, and once more presented him with her own soft white hand.

Wickham's feelings were in a whirligig.

'My dear fellow,' said Mr. Hamilton, 'you acted very honourably last night.'

'Worthily of yourself,' added Mrs. Hamilton.

'Arabella told us all,' said Mr. Hamilton.

'She has no concealments from her parents,' rejoined mamma. 'She is so perfectly ingenuous.'

'Miss Hamilton,' said Wickham, 'had nothing to conceal. My visit was wholly unexpected by her; it was, in fact, unpremeditated by myself. I acted wholly upon impulse.'

'You are the soul of honour,' said Mr. Hamilton warmly.

'The very soul,' said Mrs. Hamilton with emotion.

'And now, my dear fellow, make yourself at home again. Consider yourself always as our most welcome guest. Come whenever you are inclined,' said Mr. Hamilton

'Consider yourself as one of our own family,' said Mrs. Hamilton; 'not as visiting, but at home.'

'Exactly so,' said Mr. Hamilton, 'that is the very thing—not visiting, but at home.'

'And I trust that nothing will ever happen again to disturb our family harmony. In fact, nothing shall happen.'

'I hope not,' said Wickham.

'I hope not,' said Mrs. Hamilton.

'But where's Arabella?' asked Mr. Hamilton, knowing all the while that she had been ordered not to come till she was called for. 'Where's Arabella? Why does she not come to welcome Mr. Wickham back again?'

Arabella was sent for, and came as promptly as if she had only been waiting for the summons—came looking beautiful, though it was morning and broad daylight, for Arabella was yet on the sunny side of twenty, and therefore bore looking at in a morning—she came looking rosy, and smiling, and happy, and as unlike as possible to the wasted shadow which her father's paternal apprehensions had imagined. Wickham thought first that he must be dreaming when he found himself once more installed in the yellow satin sofa, and privileged to lounge as he liked—to stretch his limbs or to loll backwards, or to be a Turk, according to his own will and pleasure. He fancied it could be nothing but a sleeping fiction, when he found Arabella on one side looking so bright and beautiful, and Mrs. Hamilton so amiable and affectionate on the other; his comfort, nay his luxury, once more the first consideration. The fire blazed for him, and the cook studied only his appetite. At first, we say, Wickham thought this was all a dream, but he presently began to believe that this part of his life only was reality, and the rest delusion: and not until he was obliged to leave his luxuriant yellow damask sofa, and walk, yes, *walk* home to the odious court in the Temple, and that horrid Mrs. Cavanagh, was he fully certified what part of his time was spent in vision and what in reality. He went back, however, to his dungeon, which, from the contrast to that happy drawing-room in Belgrave Square, appeared ten times more insupportable. He had lost the motives to endurance—the impulses to exertion. He loathed his fusty law-books, and could not brace up his mind to open them. His energy was all dead or dormant. He was content to rest upon his oars, and let the stream of time float him along whither it would, and meanwhile to go every morning to Belgrave Square, to stop as long as he could, to sip his chocolate or pick his chicken, and to sing duets with Arabella, and help her to wind her silk—and in this fool's paradise we leave him for the present.

CHAPTER XXXIV.

We return once more to Lisson Grove and Veronese.

Veronese was just finishing off a few of the scratchings of pencils and blotchings of colourings, called sketches and drawings by her pupils, and doing it with an extremity of ill-will that almost amounted to bad temper. By dint of a dash here, and a touch there, she was performing miracles; turning ships into houses, houses into ships, land into water, water into land, trees into men, and men into sheep, as the case might be: or she was curing a parcel of eyes of squinting, or giving the right complement of limbs to beings that were intended to be human, or putting arms or legs in the positions which nature designed them to fill; and as she thus sat putting the finishing touches to these most effective specimens of the fine arts, her own heart was swelling to an extremely uncomfortable size, through the very disagreeable sensations with which it was filled.

'What *are* you doing, Veronese?' asked Mrs. Rowland, 'with all those rubbishly daubs? I am sure that it is nothing but complete waste of time.'

Now Veronese did not like to hear the productions of her pupils called '*daubs*,' though she knew them to deserve no better title.

'Bad as they are,' said Veronese, 'they are the best that I can make my pupils do. I am sure it is a vexation to me to let such things pass.'

'What are you doing with them, spending so much time over them?' asked Mrs. Rowland.

'Only touching them up,' said Veronese with a sigh.

'Touching them up! and why do you

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give yourself the trouble to do that? You might be helping me to mend your papa's things. *I* am left to do everything.'

Veronese almost choked herself with a great sigh, but did not answer.

'I am sure you are not so over well paid,' said Mrs. Rowland, 'that you need waste any more time upon them; but you'd do anything for anybody rather than for me.'

'I wish I could make these children do better,' said Veronese, 'for I am truly ashamed of their wretched caricatures of skies and trees and houses; but I think it would be as easy for me to teach them to be Miltons as to draw.'

'How seldom do you find any feeling for the arts among the children of butchers and bakers!' said the artist. 'The Browns, and the Smiths, and the Johnsons, and the Thompsons—all of them with turn-up noses and red chubby cheeks—nothing in the world is to be expected from them.'

'What's the use of trying to teach them then?' said Mrs. Rowland in her sharp querulous tones.

'My dear, that is a very sensible observation of yours. Where *is* the use of teaching them?' said the artist.

'Yes, that's all very fine of you to say so,' took up Mrs. Rowland, 'but I *do* see some use in the money it brings in, I must confess. Perhaps you may understand the secret of living without money, but *I* don't very well know how a house is to go on without it. All I say is, that I wonder that Veronese should waste her time patching up a parcel of daubs.'

'It is because they are daubs, mamma, that I am obliged to patch them up,' said Veronese.

'And so they are to pass for the children's own doing, are they? Well, if I were a parent and had my child taught anything, I should like for her to do it herself. It may be fair, but—well, I don't say anything.'

Veronese pushed away the pile of heterogeneous absurdities with a look of extreme disgust as well as of wounded feelings. 'Mamma,' she said, 'you know as well as I do how I loathe and detest this petty management, but you know too that I have been forced into its practice by the loss of pupil upon pupil, and stung by reflections on my own want of capability, until I have at last been driven into the common trickery of school teaching—and even yet I do it as little as possible: you know that it is a mere act of self-defence—a mere effort after self-preservation; for what could we do if we were to lose the mean produce of my despicable labours?'

'Mean and despicable,' said Mrs. Rowland; 'you were always too proud for your station in life, Veronese. I wonder what we have to be proud of—dragging, dragging on from one year's end to another, and never having a shilling to call one's own. Pride and poverty, Veronese! pride and poverty!'

'My dear, my dear,' deprecated the artist, interposing a few words of his own. 'My dear, my dear, it is not pride in Veronese, it is dignity of character; and as to teaching there little soulless animals, my dear Veronese, I would have you give it up directly. I cannot bear that your nice perceptions of the arts should be outraged by the stupidity of a parcel of vulgar-minded children. Give them up, my dear, give them up, we can do very well without them. People are beginning to appreciate my works. Mr. Kelly has desired me to paint him two pictures—my own choosing—my own subjects. Ah, he has a very nice feeling for the arts, but at the same time, just between ourselves, I think that he fancies he has got hold of a good speculation. He knows that my works will be bought up at a high price, and so he is laying in a stock. Yes, I should not wonder if Mr. Kelly makes a fortune out of my pictures—I shouldn't wonder at all. Yes, yes, he has his eyes open, and he knows that my paintings will be eagerly caught up when they are once estimated. I am to have a hundred pounds a-piece for the next two pictures that I am painting to order, and Mr. Kelly has begged me to allow him to look over my folios for studies and sketches; so you see, Veronese, there is no reason in the world why you should harass yourself any longer with those tiresome children.'

Unconsciously to himself Mr. Rowland had been dwelling upon the very motives which induced Veronese to persevere in her toilsome labours. She had long felt certain that Mr. Kelly's frequent purchases, on which they had nearly subsisted since his first visit, were, in fact, mere cloaks for his benevolence, and Veronese was determined that she would eat the bread of industry rather than of charity. The tears rushed into her eyes, and she lifted them from the blotted and blurred pile of rubbish, and looked out through the window into the street below. As she did so, a gay and dashing equipage drew up; the very identical grey horses and blue livery, the splendid carriage, with its handsome hammercloth, which Mrs. Reginald Courtney Gibbes had so accurately described. Veronese looked and wondered. Was it an optical deception, a delusion of vision, or did she really and truly behold the cousins for whose sake she had been so painfully anxious? Yes, there they certainly were—Grace with her pale face painted up by happiness and health; Rebecca radiant with beauty; and Susan, the tender, fragile, emaciated Susan, actually in danger of growing fat. Yes, there they all certainly were, with their six bright eyes all fastened up to the window, and there they all were struggling who should get out first, and who should get up stairs first; and long before Veronese could call back her faculties from their wondering journey, her three cousins had raced each other up the stairs, and were hanging round her neck, and with tears and kisses were rejoicing to behold her once again.

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'Now we shall be quite happy!' exclaimed Susan. 'There was nothing in the world wanting to us but that you should be a sharer in our joy and prosperity—and now, dear Veronese, we are all together again.'

'I am ten thousand fold more happy to see you than you can be to see me,' said Veronese. 'And now tell me everything that has happened.'

Whereupon the three sisters all began talking together, and, as may be supposed, Lord Killikelly was the burden of their song. It was Lord Killikelly who had sought them out in the depth of their poverty—it was Lord Killikelly who had provided them a home—it was Lord Killikelly whose generosity was unbounded—Lord Killikelly whose delicacy was the kindest and finest of perceptions. In short it was Lord Killikelly only who could be and was above mortality, and it was to him that they owed all the happiness of their present lot.

'Yes, Very, dear,' said Susan, 'and it was out of the kindness of his heart that he let us come to you to-day to tell you of our happiness. It was the only wish that we had in the world, to see you, and to let you know that we were under honourable protection—that we were no longer outcasts and beggars—and he bade us tell you that as he is our relative he is also our guardian—and, O Veronese, such a guardian he has been!'

'Yes,' said Grace, 'and he would not let us come to you in the quiet way which would have best become us, but he made us take the carriage, that you might see that he considered us as part of his family; and, Very, dear, we have promised to make you promise to come and spend all to-morrow with us, and the carriage is to fetch you in the morning, for Lord Killikelly will have it that you are a relation too, and then we are to show you everything, and tell you everything, and talk the whole day. Very, dear, we shall be so happy, shan't we?'

Veronese looked at her pile of miserable daubs, and sighed. It might be that the faintest and most transient comparison between their present lot passed across her mind; but it was too transient to leave any trace behind, and she told them how she rejoiced in their happiness, and how already she loved that generous Lord Killikelly; and then they all sat down as close together as possible, with hands so entwined that it could hardly be distinguished whose were whose, or which was which; and then the three sisters talked as fast as possible—so fast as to leave a danger that there would remain nothing to be told on the morrow; and Mrs. Rowland had a world of wonderment, and asked a thousand questions, and almost forgot to be ill-tempered, though she did think that Lord Killikelly might have come to visit them; but, upon the whole, there was as much happiness among them as ever falls to the share of joint-stock companies, and though the artist went on painting, he was as happy as any of them, in seeing them so.

CHAPTER XXXV.

Morning came. Veronese dressed herself with something of that old-fashioned care with which in by-gone days she had been in the habit of preparing for her most favoured visitors. She had sat up half the night before, putting some finishing touches to a dress which was intended to save her cousins from the discredit of having a poor and shabby relation belonging to them; and while Veronese thus stood before her glass, bestowing on herself this unwonted and peculiar care, she began to wonder afresh at all the strangeness of the strange circumstances which thus made it a perfect event to her, worthy of the distinction of a particular toilette, to visit those poor connections to whom some little time ago she would have run through the rain and the mud, wrapped up in her cloak and slouched up in her poke bonnet; and thus Veronese would cheerfully have done again, had circumstances left them in poverty and their garret: but now—strange evolutions of Fortune's wheel!—they were on the summit, and she was at the base. Veronese was hardly aware that a latent hope and expectation of seeing Lord Killikelly had a certain share in prompting the labours of her toilette.

Veronese was barely equipped, when that handsome equipage of Lord Killikelly's, which had so much excited the moral indignation of Mrs. Reginald Courtney Gibbes, with the blue and silver liveries and the grey horses, dashed up to the door, and Veronese tied her bonnet and drew on her gloves.

'You are very smart, miss,' said Mrs. Rowland, in her miserable, complaining, discontented voice; 'you look as if you had just come out of a bandbox. Never say that you don't like finery again.'

'Am I fine, mamma?' said Veronese deprecatingly. 'I did not mean to be so.'

'*Are* you fine! *I* should think so. You did not *mean*—but people can't see themselves.'

'Veronese looks well,' said the artist, with a sudden exertion of courage. '*Well*, I haven't seen her look so well for a long time.'

'Yes, she looks well enough,' said Mrs. Rowland, 'her face is red enough for a milkmaid's. As for me, I might die before anybody would find out that anything was the matter with me, ill as I am!'

'I mean that she looks intellectually well,' said the artist. 'She is in the full beauty of the mind. It is not health, or a fine colour, or bright eyes, that make people look well: these are mere vulgar earthly things. I speak of the beauty of the mind.'

'Fine feathers make fine birds,' said Mrs. Rowland, 'and don't you see how fine she is.'

'Veronese, my dear,' said the painter, turning full round with his brush and palette in dangerous proximity to her dress, 'let me look what you have got on. Ah, I see, my dear, I see. There is some fault in your dress, my dear, I must allow; but with a

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little alteration, you would make a good picture—a very good picture. Modern bonnets are sad things, my dear—in very bad taste indeed; now, if you would pull off that bonnet, your hair is quite Madonna-like, quite like the old statues—classical—only rather too formal; you ought to loosen it a little, and let a few locks hang down behind, and make one side of the face rather different from the other; the braids are too much alike—too regular. And, Veronese, there is the same fault in the manner in which you wear you shawl—you have got it fastened exactly in the middle—you ought to have thrown it negligently over one shoulder; or, if you must fasten it, put a brooch in it on the left shoulder, something like a Roman toga; and then the robe—it looks too fresh—too new—it wants sobering down by time. Ah, my dear, I see that your mamma is right—you must make haste and get it mellowed down—fresh things, just as if they had come new out of a shop, never look well—never make good pictures; they all want time—time. But I have a great mind to paint you—I could make allowance for all that, and you could easily hang your shawl in better drapery, and loosen your hair.'

Veronese having listened to this unwonted lecture on dress from her papa, excused herself from the sitting as well as she could, on the plea that her dress would be in better condition when it was in worse, and the artist, fairly satisfied with so valid an excuse, bade her good-bye, only pitying her not a little that she was obliged to ride in a carriage, and miss all the magnificent rain clouds, instead of going on foot and enjoying them.

'And I hope you'll enjoy yourself,' said Mrs. Rowland, in a fine strain of irony, 'especially when you remember that you've left me ill—ill as I am, at home:—but I don't suppose *that* will ever come into your head, as it's so full of other things.'

'Mamma!' said Veronese.

'Yes, and you can tell your fine cousins that I am much obliged to them for their kind attention, and that I wish I may go when they do ask me, that's all.'

Poor Veronese turned away with a tear, half of indignation and half of sorrow, in her eye, glad to leave domestic misery behind her, and secretly half pleased that Mrs. Rowland had not been included in her invitation. Does not domestic misery make up nine-tenths of the wretchedness of the world.

So Veronese stepped into that lordly equipage with as sad and as embittered a heart as can well be imagined; longing in her secret soul for some little spot where her troubled spirit might rest itself, some obscure nook or corner where strife and temper could never enter, and where she might find peace; and these thoughts scarcely subsided before Veronese found herself at the end of her journey. The carriage stopped at the garden gate of that pretty cottage, with its trim lawn and French windows of which we have already spoken, at which Veronese now saw her cousins watching for her arrival, with such bright and happy faces, as seemed to shine in a perfect illumination through the panes; and in a moment more Veronese was in half-a-dozen arms, and wrapped close up to some quarter of a dozen hearts, and had given receipts for a few dozen of kisses.

Everything was new, everything was strange, everything was delightful. Veronese was conducted into every room in the house, and not only every room, but was shown every corner and crevice and cranny about the place. She was called upon to admire every article of furniture, every carpet, and every curtain. 'Is not this pretty? this was chosen by Lord Killikelly.' 'Now, Veronese, is not this beautiful? Lord Killikelly bought it,' met her at every turn. In fact Lord Killikelly's name seemed to haunt the habitation, and when at last, having traversed the whole place, garden and all, Veronese was ushered up into the bedrooms of her cousins, and they proceeded to turn out every drawer, and open every closet, and empty every box, and when, appended to every article, like a label, she heard over and over again, times out of count repeated, 'Lord Killikelly bought us this;' or, 'Lord Killikelly sent us that;' or, 'Lord Killikelly likes this,' and 'Lord Killikelly does not like that.' Why then, we say, Veronese began to think that there could be but one phœnix in the world, and that one must certainly be Lord Killikelly.

Veronese being at length wearied with the labour of admiring, was at last hurried off to be introduced to the mother of the young clergyman. The calm, urbane, benevolent expression of Mrs. Burnet's countenance, and her kind placid manners, made Veronese feel a sort of peaceful rest in her society, which acted something like a composing draught after the excitement of her cousins' exhilaration. She felt, too, that her predilection was reciprocated—are not our preferences as intuitive as our antipathies?—for Mrs. Burnet sat down upon the sofa by her side, and at once admitting her into the family confidence, spoke without reserve of all their plans and projects, of all the events of home which gather their importance from the interests of the heart: referred to the troubles of the past, not with murmuring, but only to enhance the contentment of the present from the contrast; dilated with gratitude on the happiness of their domestic circle; with a mother's pride and a mother's love on the character of her son, the young clergyman Paul Burnet, and with a sort of subdued affectionate admiration of Lord Killikelly.

'Indeed, my dear,' said Mrs. Burnet, 'I am almost as happy as your cousins to see you among us. We have all of us been made acquainted with you by report, and we consider you as an old friend. Your cousins and Lord Killikelly strive to outvie each other, as to who shall do you the most justice; and both my son Paul and myself are in con-

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siderable danger of intruding upon you the over familiarity of an old friendship, instead of the courtesy of a new.'

'Can you do a kinder thing than to forget that I am a stranger?' said Veronese; 'but Lord Killikelly—how have I been so fortunate as to be included in his favour.'

'I suppose,' said Mrs. Burnet, 'that those whom everybody loves must love everybody.'

'Ah, then,' said Veronese, 'that robs the kindness of its charm: I am afraid I cannot be satisfied with that.'

'Ah, Veronese,' said Susan, 'there peeps out your jealous heart.'

'Well, perhaps so; but now do tell me what Lord Killikelly is like.'

'Mentally or bodily?' asked Rebecca.

'Mentally first,' said Veronese.

Her three cousins immediately took up a chorus of praise. Lord Killikelly was the kindest, the most amiable, the most intelligent, the highest-minded, the noblest-souled, the most liberal-handed, the most open-hearted, kind, good, dear, generous.

'Stay! stay!' said Veronese, 'if you run such a race I shall never be able to follow you—and you, Mrs. Burnet, do you partake in the general intoxication?'

'What Lord Killikelly may have done for your cousins,' said Mrs. Burnet, 'he doubtless thinks but a family duty; but his kindness and liberality to myself and my son are of his own free and unprompted generosity of nature. He is always studying to increase our comforts, and yet we are all so happy here that I almost dread rather than desire any change.'

'And have you any change in view?' asked Veronese.

'Lord Killikelly is giving a living in the country to my son Paul, and that probably will make changes among us all.'

Veronese followed the direction of Mrs. Burnet's eye as it travelled to Rebecca, and saw the cheek of her cousin flush to crimson, and her eye, full of revealing meanings, sink upon the floor.

'Rebecca,' said Veronese, 'here is a secret into which I am not admitted.'

Rebecca rose, and in a state of agitation made up of happiness and embarrassment, threw her arms round Veronese and kissed her cheek.

'We have no secrets from you,' said Rebecca—'you who were in all our troubles our truest and steadiest friend, one of ourselves; but I seem to walk in a dream, and a happy one indeed, but it is accompanied by the dread that I shall presently stumble and awake. I cannot even yet believe that this is all substantial—that we are really under the care of that kind and generous man—that we are surrounded by blessings, or that I myself, faded with sorrow and anxiety, and with feelings soured and embittered rather than purified by the chastenings we have passed through—I say that I can scarcely believe that such an one as myself can really be the object of Mr. Burnet's love, when there are so many younger, and more beautiful and happier creatures in the world, on whom the sun has never shone, or the wind blown, but who have been nursed in the heart of some loving family in such innocent happiness as almost to seem like angels, and among them he might have chosen instead of one of ourselves, who have been bruised, and crushed, and seared, by the buffetings of the world!'

Rebecca hurried out of the room to hide the gush of her emotions, and Mrs. Burnet rose and followed her. Veronese sat silent for a little while, a crowd of contrary opposing feelings rushing across her mind. These hearts of ours are curious things after all. Veronese unquestionably rejoiced in her cousin's happiness; but perhaps no woman ever hears that another of her sex has paired off from the ranks of singleness, especially if that one be younger than herself, without an emotion, it may be unacknowledged to her own heart, but without an emotion of disappointment; and when we scoff at this as a mean envy, we scoff at our common mother Nature, whose suggestion it unquestionably is. Perhaps it is disappointment that it is not herself—perhaps she fears that one chance less remains of meeting her own kindred soul in the dropping off of the number on whom the lot might fall—perhaps she feels more lonely as another and another of her sisters in single blessedness lose their contentment, and seek a new vocation—perhaps it makes her feel that she is growing older, and that too has a natural pang: however it may be, Veronese was only a woman, and she felt for a little space a woman's natural emotions; she rejoiced in Rebecca's joy, but she felt her own unhappiness the more.

The young clergyman came; his mild and amiable aspect at once prepossessed Veronese in his favour. He was not handsome, but the placidity of his countenance soothed the mind like the calm of a quiet summer evening, and when he smiled, which was but seldom, the effect was that of gladdening sunshine. It has been said that in the presence of a beloved object a woman always looks more beautiful than at any other time, and that there is a striking accession of personal attraction. Doubtless this *is* the beauty of sentiment, a gleaming of the loveliness of angelic grace. Veronese thought that she had never seen Rebecca look half so handsome, as she sat almost in silence with her eyes full of quiet happiness, whilst the rest of the party were cheerfully garrulous—all but Veronese herself, in the bottom of whose heart were nestling unacknowledged feelings of discontent with her own share of this world's happiness. She was disappointed too at not seeing the peer, which she had confidently reckoned upon. The sound of every carriage, the opening of every door, excited her expectation; but he never came, and Veronese internally said, 'He does not wish to know me. He does not care for seeing me. What interest could he have in me?

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I am but like a drop of water in the sea, or a grain of sand upon the shore. I am as insignificant in his estimation as one of the meanest of the mobs that crowd along the streets. Everybody else can find somebody to care for them—to be kind to them—to love them. But I—I am—— Even Mr. Wickham, whom I foolishly thought bound to me by similar feelings and similar disappointments, even he can dote upon a heartless girl, and be the tool of her selfish parents, rather than—— My heart, be quiet and give over feeling. I *will* feel no more.'

At last that day was over, that day of unquiet thought. The handsome equipage of the peer dashed up to the gate of that pretty cottage. Veronese was surrounded by handmaids, every one emulous who should be her best servant; her bonnet was tied by one, her shawl arranged by another, and her gloves held by a third. The mother of the young clergyman kissed her, and the young clergyman himself handed her into the carriage, and her cousins crowded round her to the very door, in great disregard of their gentility.

'Dear Veronese,' whispered Susan, 'you will find a parcel on the seat—it is a present for you and for aunt Rowland, with Lord Killikelly's love, and ours.'

The carriage drove away, and Veronese called home her scattered thoughts. She looked into the mirror of her own heart, and recoiled from the image of herself. 'Yes,' exclaimed Veronese to herself, 'I will call things by their right names. I am envious, I am discontented—mean and contemptible emotions! Have I not said to myself daily for many years that I had relinquished all hopes of this world's happiness? What is it to me who is rich—who is beloved? I have my own duties to perform, low and degrading though they may be; but *are duties ever degrading?* No, no! This life will soon be over. But I did expect differently from Mr Wickham.'

By the time Veronese reached home she was herself again; and when the parcel of which Susan had warned her was unfolded in the presence of Mrs. Rowland, and found to contain a particularly handsome veil and shawl, labelled and ticketed 'For aunt Rowland, from our dear Lord Killikelly,' she was so far mollified as almost to forgive Veronese for having spent a happy day, as she supposed.

CHAPTER XXXVI.

Morning came and found Veronese in her usual frame of mind; that is, content to be miserable, and prepared to go through the toilsome drudgery of her accustomed days in the proud uncomplainingness which she imagined to be fortitude and resignation. She had just selected the drawings for her pupils, and had collected her pencils, and was consulting with herself how she should make some awkward Anna Maria, and some stupid Caroline Matilda, and some perverse Jemima Jane, make straight lines instead of crooked ones, and trees that might not be so often mistaken for wigs, and clouds that should not look quite so much like stone-quarries; she was doing all this, we say, whilst Mrs. Rowland sat admiring her shawl and her veil, and the painter was sketching out an elaborate design which he had promised to execute for Mr. Kelly, who was in such great fear that he should be overbidden in price, or forestalled by some other purchaser, that he had actually paid for it beforehand. The Rowland family were thus occupied, we say, when they were disturbed by the rattling up of a carriage, and a dreadful hammering at the door, and in a few minutes more the maid of the establishment, who, 'was everything by turns, and nothing long,' officiating successively as housemaid, and kitchen-maid, and cook, and laundry-maid, and butler, and porter, and page; this individual of various and versatile offices having been duly instructed by the coachman, who had himself been duly instructed before he set off, now announced the illustrious visitors who had arrived to honour the domicile of the Rowlands, namely, 'Mrs. and Miss Phillicody and the right honourable Lord Killikelly.' Veronese felt the blood rush into her face, and then recede—the honour in which she had learnt to hold Lord Killikelly's name made him an object of deep interest to her. The instinctive yearnings of relationship, combined with the respect and admiration with which she regarded the generosity of his character, and she felt instinctively drawn towards him. Wickham had taught her to honour him, and his conduct to the Warwicks had stamped him with the seal, the very letters patent of true nobility; and now how truly generous and kind that he should thus wave the advantages of his condition, and come to visit them in their humble dwelling.

Veronese half wished for one moment that she had had her yesterday's dress on but the next instant despised herself for the latent desire; and she had just restored herself to her usual standard of mind, when fat Mrs. Phillicody, after standing upon ceremony with the surreptitious copy of Lord Killikelly at the door for three minutes and a half, as to who should take precedence, entered the room in the highest possible state, having on one of the richest golden-coloured figured satins that Swan and Edgar could produce, with velvet shawl hanging over her shoulders, and velvet bonnet upon her head, with feathers on the outside, and flowers in the in; and an abundance of fresh curls and French blonde, and a very wealthy-looking reticule hanging over her arm, and altogether looking as splendiferous as any lady who was the relation of a lord might desire; and after her came Phœbe, dressed out in what had once been intended for wedding finery, but was now degraded into the ranks of mere ordinary attire. Veronese looked at her visitors with wonder, and she gazed

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at the door with an anxious curiosity. There is a strange feeling attached to our first interview with a near relative. Veronese felt a perfect palpitation of the heart. In what sort of a form was shrined that most generous mind which she already loved and honoured? How much she wished he would like her, and how much she feared he would not! How could she show him her admiring regard, how could she make him sensible of her respect? How could she break through the disagreeable coldness of her own manners which hung round her like a restraining chain, and made her so disagreeably repulsive, often when she wished to show the kindness of her yearning heart? But there was no more time for thought—Veronese looked her first look on him she believed to be Lord Killikelly.

Ravel entered with a mixture of grave condescension and dignity, such as was intended to do honour even to his own elevated condition. He was considerably over-dressed, the everyday fault of all assuming people; his hair was most elaborately curled, his boots were Hoby's, his coat Stultz's, his waistcoat the fabrication of a French artist, his shirt collar immaculate, and his cravat unimpeachably folded; and he wore as many diamonds as would have done for the dowry of a German princess—diamond studs, diamond *pin*, and three diamond rings, with the accompaniment of a splendid golden guard, and a cluster of seals and bijouterie appended to his watch, of about the value of some five hundred guineas, things which, if the real Lord Killikelly over thought about them at all, he would have supposed to be quietly slumbering on the velvet beds of his jewel cases, where, for any interest he took in them, they might have been somnolent for ever.

'Mrs. Rowland,' said Mrs. Phillicody, drawing horself up and dropping her usual appellation of 'sister Rowland,' as being beneath her present portion of family dignity; 'Mrs. Rowland, allow me to introduce our right honourable relation, Lord Killikelly—Veronese, my dear, Lord Killikelly.'

Ravel touched the tip of Mrs. Rowland's fingers, much as if they had been the claws of a black living crab, saying, 'How do you do, madam? very happy to make your acquaintance;' and without waiting for reply, turned round, and lifting his glass to his eye, threw himself into an attitude, and stood staring at Veronese for a time that seemed interminable to her, and in a manner so offensive, that her pride instantly took the alarm, and from that moment there commenced a war in the mind of Veronese between the feelings which had been excited towards Lord Killikelly in his absence, and those which originated from himself in his own presence, which were from first to last most oddly at variance.

Ravel dropped his glass, and throwing himself down by the side of Veronese, drawled out, 'You and I must be better acquainted.'

Veronese bowed. She was taken by surprise at this manner of opening their acquaintance.

'I am sure I am vastly obliged to my—a—a—new friend, Mrs. Phillicody, for bringing me to see you. How do you contrive to live in this out of the way place? but I suppose you like retirement—so do I. These rooms are very comfortable. I have a closet about twice the size down at one of my seats, in which I often spend half an hour. I do indeed. I should like amazingly to lead a retired life—I should, really, if my position in society did not force me into the higher eminences of public elevation. Don't you think I should do for retirement?'

'I have scarcely yet had time to presume to form an opinion for what your lordship is best fitted.'

'O, my dear!' exclaimed Mrs. Phillicody, much shocked at her niece's want of tact, 'everybody can see with half an eye that his lordship is best fitted to be a parliament man and to make speeches, and to be the ornament of his magnificent house in the country too.'

'You are pleased to be partial, my dear madam,' said the peer, modestly; 'but there are minds, my dear, (you know we are near relations, Miss Rowland, and I use the privilege of relationship,)—there are minds, my dear, that, though called upon to be the pilot star to the helm of state, would yet rather condescend to quit their orbit, and leave the world in darkness, to return to some blissful wilderness of sweets with a congenial mind, "the world forgetting, by the world forgot," and there, among the flocks and the herds, and the bleating of the sheep, and the sighing of the winds, and the music of the flowers, evaporate life away like the distillation of a perfumer's shop. Apropos, do you patronize verbina?'

'How beautiful his lordship talks!' said Mrs. Phillicody, in an ecstasy of admiration.

'I will send you some, and when you inhale its fragrance, think of that wilderness of sweets, and imagine what such a paradise might be with a kindred spirit. I was once at the Lakes with my Lord—a—a—I mean my Lord—a—a—the Duke, and I really think I could contrive to live there with only half-a-dozen servants. Could you?

'My lot in life,' said Veronese, 'is not to be of my own choosing.'

'Veronese,' said Mrs. Phillicody, in a loud whisper, 'you should always say, My lord, to his lordship.

'My dear madam,' said Ravel, with great dignity, 'allow Miss Rowland and myself to settle our own affairs. Let her call me what she pleases. With *her* I am proud to waive all the considerations of rank. She cannot show me a greater kindness than to forget every distinction between us.'

'What an angel of a man!' said Mrs. Phillicody. Veronese from that moment never forgot the 'lording.'

'Never mind that fat old woman' whispered Ravel. 'We will be as familiar as we please without consulting her. I should

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suppose that relations have a right to be free and easy with each other, Mutual confidence is like the anchor of hope, and the cable binds our hearts together—and oh! if there be an elysium on earth, it is this! it is this!'

Veronese was getting the skein of her mind rather entangled: she could only suppose that Lord Killikelly meant to be very kind, but was rather puzzled at his mode of development.

'You can't think what a happiness it is to me to make your acquaintance, and what a horrible catastrophe it appears to my excited feelings that I should so long have been ignorant of an existence so nearly angelic. I seem to have lost the happiness of all my past existence,' whispered Ravel. 'But I must not suffer my admiration of you to monopolize my thoughts from the rest of these people. Public men have public duties. We are not our own; we must divide ourselves into portions, and distribute ourselves over the land. I will come and see you again without these incumbrances,' and Ravel glanced towards Mrs. Phillicody and Miss Phœbe. 'I will come *alone*, and then we can enjoy each other's society more fully, more entirely. But now I must go and take some notice of the good lady your mamma.' And so saying, Ravel transferred himself to Mrs. Rowland's elbow.

'Well, my dear madam, and how do you find yourself by this time?' said Ravel, as he passed his hand through his hair, and then indulged himself with a contemplation of his white hands and jewelled fingers.

'I enjoy a very bad state of health, my lord, I thank your lordship,' replied Mrs. Rowland, in her usual miserable voice. 'I scarcely know what it is to be well for a day together.'

'Nervous?' condescendingly inquired my lord.

'I think I am nervous,' said Mrs. Rowland; 'the least thing puts me in such a flutter.'

'Change of air, dear madam, change of air. Have you tried that?'

Mrs. Rowland declared that she was so much tied to home as never to be able to leave it—everything would go wrong if she were away.

'Chambers, Latham, Clarke—those sort of people—have you tried them?'

Mrs. Rowland was rather amazed to hear the owners of such revered names spoken of in such a familiar manner. What a great man must Lord Killikelly be, to stand so high above them! She thanked his lordship for his sympathy, which was more than she received from other people, but she did not think anything would ever do her good.

'Try them, my dear madam, try them,' said Ravel. 'Shall I order my people to send one or two of them to you?'

Mrs. Rowland was horror-stricken for fear of the expense.

'The expense would be nothing at this distance from town,' said Mrs. Phillicody, meaning to imply that it would be nothing to her, but a good deal to the Rowlands.

'Nothing—a mere nothing,' said Ravel. 'A couple of guineas fee would be sufficient, and it would be well worth trying for a month or two.'

Two guineas a day for a month or two!—Mrs. Rowland was ready to faint.

'But perhaps you don't patronise the profession—you would "throw physic to the dogs;" and I quite agree with you. No; I would recommend change of air. Mrs. Phillicody proposes emerging out of that soap-breathing neighbourhood of Bermondsey, and expanding her sunny wings in the brighter atmosphere of Berkshire. She proposes making a neighbour of the Queen, and ruralizing in the delightful locality of Windsor, and I think you cannot do better than domicile yourself in her agreeable society for a few weeks, and try what the change will do for you. You see, my dear ladies, being all relations together, I am making your affairs quite a matter of family interest.'

Which of the two ladies felt most obliged by his lordship's disinterestedness it is hardly necessary to inquire.

'Sister Phillicody going to live at Windsor!' exclaimed Mrs. Rowland.

'Mrs. Phillicody is going to exercise her own good sense and good taste at last,' said Ravel. 'How do you suppose it possible that she could exist in that low place any longer? It is quite plebeian. It might do as a sort of incognito, whilst nobody knew the family connections; but now, when the head of the family is incorporated and entwined in its public interests, when I have waived the considerations of my aristocratical position, and my tastes and sentiments are both involved in the vortex; then, I say, it becomes every upright and manly member of the constitution to consider his public duties; and, to speak logically, though I abhor all learned pretensions, it becomes the duty of my amiable friend and relative here, Mrs. Phillicody, to emigrate from the dull region of the earth to which she has been so barbarously condemned, as severely as though she had been sent to the penal settlements.'

'How very fine,' said Mrs. Phillicody. 'Yes, to be sure it is my duty, and I will do it. I will leave Bermondsey, let who will say nay.'

'Let pa say what he pleases,' said Phœbe, 'he must submit at last, let him flounce ever so.'

'It is his duty to submit to a lady,' said Ravel, gallantly. 'When I see him I shall make a point of enforcing this upon him; and in his case it is more especially binding than in most others, since a lady of such high connections has condescended to take him into her family.'

'Is Lord Killikelly quizzing?' thought Veronese.

'When I see your good man,' resumed

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the surreptitious peer, addressing Mrs. Phillicody, 'I shall certainly intimate as much to him, delicately—of course delicately—but he ought to be made to understand that he has no right to trifle with the sensibility of your feelings on so important a point as your family consideration.'

'Certainly not,' said Mrs. Phillicody.

'If I were ma, pa shouldn't,' said Phœbe.

'When that very deserving young man, Mr. Mark Phillicody, first called upon me at my mansion—my town-house—my family establishment, and after some trouble to himself—for I was prejudiced,—I confess that I was prejudiced'—said Ravel, with most liberal-minded humility, 'and after I had refused a long time to admit him, for I did not *then* like making inferior connections.' Here he glanced gallantly at Veronese, and saw the indignant flush of pride at the insult, which he mistook for blushing satisfaction at the compliment. 'And I requested my gentleman,—who is indeed, in the strictest sense of the word, a gentleman, being a man of education and birth, highly accomplished, and altogether a very fascinating fellow, especially with the ladies, and whose attentions to myself I consider quite a condescension, being in fact only the obligations of a friend——'

'How amiable!' chimed in Mrs. Phillicody.

'I said to this gentleman, "My dear Ravel," said I, "do oblige me so much as to see that they don't let that Mr. Mark Phillicody come up to me—don't let him get in at me." Ha! ha! I was facetious just then. and was thinking of wild beasts.'

'Ha! ha!' faintly endeavoured Mrs. Phillicody.

'Ha! ha! ha!' more heartily laughed Mrs. Rowland.

'And I even went so far as to speak to one of the fellows of my establishment, though I seldom condescend to address my menials, but in this case I did. I remember the very words. "Stapleton," said I, "give orders in the hall that this Mr. Phillicody is not to be admitted, under any pretence whatever."'

These had been the real Lord Killikelly's real words.

Mrs. Phillicody tried to get up another laugh, but succeeded most miserably. Mrs. Rowland was much more natural.

'And now you see, my dear ladies, I am quite domesticated among you. Quite tied to your apron-strings. Ha! ha! When the ice was once broken, I determined upon knowing you all; and therefore it was that I begged a seat in Mrs. Phillicody's carriage this morning, and happy am I that I did so, since it has been the means of introducing me to some of the fairest creatures of earth's mould.'

Ravel, wishing to be quite impartial in his gallantry, glanced towards Mrs. Rowland as well as to Veronese, thus dividing the compliment as equally as possible, though anybody else would have been puzzled where lay the angelic part in Mrs. Rowland's sour, lanky, discontented visage.

Mrs. Phillicody did not quite so much admire the peer in this last speech of his, and Phœbe quite wondered how such a sensible man could talk such nonsense.

'Sister Phillicody's carriage!' shrieked Mrs. Rowland; 'why surely you haven't set up your carriage, have you?'

'Mrs. Phillicody's present equipage is not the one which she means ultimately to select. It is only a temporary substitute whilst her own is being built,' said Ravel. 'The wheels are not yet picked out, and we have not yet decided on the hammercloth; and in the meantime she is obliged to accommodate herself to that which she now drives. I should have been very happy to have sent her over one of my own equipages and four of my horses, but it could not be on account of the servants—I could not send *them* to Bermondsey.'

'More particularly,' said Mrs. Rowland spitefully, 'as the court at Bermondsey, which leads up to the soap-boiling, was not built wide enough for anything larger than a barrow.'

'Ha! ha! No, certainly; but Mrs. Phillicody will soon wash her hands of all that—ha! ha! Excuse me, but every now and then I am taken with a fit of jocularity, and people will have it that I am witty—but it is all a mistake—quite a mistake. The Duke of Northumberland said to me the other day, "My Lord Killikelly, my Lord Killikelly, what a wit you are!" but I really am not, I am not indeed, whether you believe me or no.'

Veronese did quite believe him, but Mrs. Phillicody and Phœbe declared that they could not.

'Yes, I determined,' said the would-be peer, in a tone of high magnanimity, 'I determined, having once passed the Rubicon, having once strided over the line of demarcation—and a good stride it was—to know you all, and to give you every proof of my family interest as far as I am able—proofs which I trust are most convincing in the pains I am taking to draw out my worthy relations, the Phillicody's, from the slime and slough of their present inferior and unworthy condition.'

'I'm sure your lordship is very kind,' said Mrs. Phillicody.

'And I am sure I am very much obliged to your lordship for your kindness in thinking of me,' said Mrs. Rowland, preparing to thank him for his India shawl and splendid veil.

'I receive as much pleasure as I can confer,' said Ravel, in such agreeable society.'

'Your lordship won't understand me,' said Mrs. Rowland! 'did your lordship ever see these before?' and she held up her shawl and veil.

'I make a point of never noticing a lady's dress,' said Ravel.

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'Ah, your lordship is determined not to understand.'

'I do not understand, indeed.'

'Perhaps Lord Killikelly won't recollect, though it was only yesterday that he sent me this beautiful present.'

'Did he, indeed?' exclaimed Ravel. 'Did he indeed?'

'You, my lord; you yourself.'

'Indeed!'

'And Veronese two others quite as handsome.'

'Did I indeed?'

'Ah, my lord, you don't like to acknowledge your kindness.'

'Well, since you have found me out—ha! ha! ha! but pray say nothing more about it.'

'Only we beg to return our most sincere thanks.'

'Not a word, not a word, my dear madam. Anything that I can do for you, or your most amiable family, I shall always have the greatest luxury of mind in doing; and if these unworthy marks of my high admiration and esteem, are acceptable to you, I shall consider it as one of the proudest moments of my life.'

'Veronese, why don't you thank his lordship?' said Mrs. Rowland.

Poor Veronese rummaged in her vocabulary, but could not find any words.

Mrs. Phillicody and Phœbe were unanimous in thinking that Lord Killikelly would have shown much more sense and taste in sending his presents to Bermondsey than to Lisson Grove.

'Had I had the pleasure of knowing you sooner,' said Ravel to Veronese, 'I should have been aware that a veil would have been the most envious of all created things to have laid at your feet, since it must hide you from all our devotional eyes; but still it may be the means of preserving the senses of a few dozen of unfortunate fellows.'

'Your lordship is disposed to be merry at my expense,' said Veronese.

'No, indeed, then, upon my honour, you wrong me,' replied Ravel, taking out a cambric handkerchief, embrocated with a mixture of fragrant odours, and industriously displaying the coronet marked in the corner. 'You wrong me there, for the contemplation of you is much more likely to excite an emotion of the most exquisite sensibility—a sensibility worthy of the heart and the mind of the most exalted natures. Yes, when I look upon you, it seems to me as if my late lady—I mean my most angelic mamma, had risen from her marble tomb to smile upon me, her most unworthy son, again, and think how such a seraphic vision must vibrate across the chords of my soul.'

Ravel raised the fragrant handkerchief to his eyes, taking care to leave the coroneted corner hanging out. Mrs. Phillicody took out her French cambric, trimmed with real lace; Phœbe her Scotch cambric, set round with Urling's. Mrs. Rowland rather reluctantly produced a somewhat soiled affair, not having prepared herself for such an affecting incident; and Veronese being particularly hard-hearted, sat asking herself all sorts of questions, respecting her own opinion of Lord Killikelly.

'Yes,' resumed Ravel, again apostrophising Veronese, 'when I look into your large, black, gazelle-like eyes, your fine Madonna face, your beautiful braided hair, your aquiline nose, and your rose-bud mouth, I am tempted to think that I see my most honoured parent descended from the bright abodes to bless my gazing eyes.'

Ravel having delivered this choice morsel of pathetic eloquence, continued staring at Veronese in a manner, which, if he had not entered into such an explanation, might, by a stray possibility, have been mistaken for a very impertinent admiration, looking, as it did, amazingly like it; and producing in her, in the course of a few seconds, signs of restlessness and impatience, which seemed to warn the gentleman's eyes off the premises; and Ravel having gone through the pathetic pantomime, made his handkerchief take its exit into his pocket, called his eyes home again, and completed the scene with a final closing sigh.

'We must not indulge in recollections,' said Ravel, 'they are too soul-subduing, too spiritually enervating. I must again resume my real energy of character. My dear madam, I have not yet been introduced to the worthy gentleman, your *caro sposo*. I presume that he is industriously engaged in the next room, if I may judge from the motion of his elbow, and I have been flattering myself that he would have done me the honour of desiring to be known to me. But since the man wont come to the mountain, the mountain must go to the man. Ha! ha! ha!'

Mrs. Rowland immediately led the way over the five feet which intervened, and Ravel followed,

'Matthew, my dear,' said the artist's lady, 'my lord desires to have you introduced to him.'

The artist gave his chair a sort of clumsy backward motion, his head an exceedingly uncouth bob, and mumbled sounds that were meant for words, though *what* words the artist himself would have been puzzled to express; and having gone through this imperious duty, he fixed his eyes upon the peer's face, and began to consider him physiognomically and phrenologically.

'Very happy to make your acquaintance,' said Ravel, condescendingly. 'So you are painting. Ah! quite in the Martin style.'

'I copy nobody's style but my own, my lord.'

'Ah! I see. Very good, indeed! The Deluge—those two people are climbing to the top of the hill admirably. I quite feel for them.'

'Jonathan and his armour-bearer,' said the painter, with only half-smothered indignation.

'Ah, indeed! but don't you think they had

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better have shown us their face? It's rather rude of them to turn their backs upon us. Ha! ha! ha!'

The artist maintained an indignant silence.

'Very clever indeed. Those mobs behind put me in mind of the Lilliputians. Have you ever read Gulliver? a very clever fellow, indeed, was that Gulliver. Well, and what have we here?' said the deceptive peer, putting up his glass and looking round. 'Ah! the sea is a washing-bason; what a passion it looks in. Ah! a storm—thunder and lightning playing at hide and seek. Ha! ha! ha! You see, my dear madam, how versatile are my tempers. A few minutes back I was in agonies of sensibility, and now I am full of mirth. Ha! ha! ha! And what have we here?—a very pretty creature, upon my honour. Pray is it a fancy head?'

'Your lordship must know it well,' said Mrs. Rowland.

'Not I,' upon my honour.'

'Then it must be a very bad likeness, and we all consider it a very good one.'

'Who is it, my good madam? Who is it? I never saw the face before.'

'O yes, my lord. It is Grace Warwick.'

'Grace Warwick! and who is she?'

'Ah, my lord, you know very well.'

'Do I?'

'Yes, but that is like the presents. Your lordship won't remember your own generosity.'

'Ah, like them, is it? Well, since you will find me out. Ha! ha! ha! But I must go. I must tear myself away from such agreeable society. Call Mrs. Phillicody s carriage!' and Ravel rang the bell furiously. 'Order up Mrs. Phillicody's carriage. Bid the fellow drive up. I have just remembered a most important engagement with the minister. I shall keep Melbourne waiting. Good morning, my dear madam; good morning, my dear sir; good morning, Miss Rowland.' And then dropping his voice to a whisper, in the ear of Veronese, 'My dear creature, I will come and see you again. You have made the deepest impression upon me. But you see I have been prudent. I have made the amiable to these people for your sake. Do not fear but I will soon see you again, and lay my homage at your feet.'

Ravel hurried off. He jumped into the hired vehicle which was doing duty as Mrs. Phillicody's carriage, and left the ladies to follow: he must keep up his dignity. Ravel was in the seventh heaven of his fool's paradise. He had acquitted himself, according to his own estimation, in most admirable style, and yet he had twice found himself upon the precipice of discovery, though he had fancied himself armed against such a possibility, having every credential for establishing his authentic identity, as much even as his lord could possess, being in the daily habit of perusing all his lord's letters, perfectly acquainted with his private affairs, and thoroughly competent to quote even his most familiar words. And yet, with all these advantages, he knew nothing of the presents to the Rowlands, nor of who on earth Grace Warwick could be; and not daring to ask, he had felt obliged to decamp as hastily as possible, having the utmost dread of exposing his own ignorance.

Ravel sat silent in that carriage corner, much to the chagrin of Mrs. Phillicody and Phœbe. He was very busy telling himself what he would do. 'That Veronese is a very fine girl, though rather too old. Wonderfully like my late lady, and my lord married her. *I* will have this girl. I shall then be related to my lord—he will, doubtless, do something for us—I am sure of that—get me a capital government situation—he could do it as easily as not. It is an excellent spec.'

THE QUESTION ANSWERED.

IMPROMPTU.

There is a splendid mansion, graced
By beauty rare to look upon;
And where, harmoniously embraced,
Are Worth and Beauty blessing Ton.

Why this Muse-honoured house should bear
The epithet of Gore I'd learn?—
Some, with the *Bloody hand*, go there,
And *all*, with *bleeding hearts*, return.

E. H.

MEMOIR OF MISS EMMA ROBERTS.

BY MRS. C. RICHARDSON.

Those who were personally acquainted with the late talented and popular authoress, Miss Emma Roberts, whose loss will be equally deplored as a friend and as an ornament, by every circle in which she moved, will know how difficult is thetask of doing justice to the brilliant qualities, and manifold excellence of a character like hers; or to convey, in anything like adequate terms, the deep feelings of regret with which the mournful tidings of her death have been received, not only by her admiring friends, but by the reading public generally.

In the literary world, she was so well known, as a popular and agreeable writer on every subject that had employed her versatile pen, that some record of her personal history and successful career will naturally be expected.

Miss Emma Roberts was the descendant of a very ancient and considerable family in North Wales, her grandfather having been the possessor of that fine estate in Den-

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bighshire called Kimmel Park, which his eldest son, General Roberts, sold some years since to the father of the present Lord Dinorben.

The family were conspicuous for their high character and military bravery, Captain Roberts (the father of my late beloved friend) and his three brothers having severally distinguished themselves in various different engagements.

General Roberts, the eldest brother, raised and equipped at his own expense the 111th regiment, now the 99th; and the idea of thus raising troops originated with, and was first suggested to Mr. Pitt by him, who did not hesitate in acknowledging and profiting by it.

Colonel David Roberts, of the fifty-first regiment, (the second brother,) lost his arm whilst repulsing the French light brigade on the heights of Lugo, in the memorable retreat of Corunna, in which Sir John Moore so gloriously fell, and each of the four brothers was mentioned most honourably in the despatches of that period. Colonel Roberts was the author of a comic military sketch called 'Johnny Newcome.'

The love of distinction which seems to have been an inherent principle in this family, animated the bosom of the distinguished object of this memoir, and with the same laudable ambition she early resolved to acquire a name and fame, by applying those talents which she inherited from her mother, a lady of some literary pretensions, to purposes of general utility.

Those who have read an exquisite little volume, entitled 'Oriental Scenes,' could not doubt that she was capable of attaining a high degree of reputation in poetry, which she wrote with such surprising facility, that, to borrow her own expression, 'Her thoughts poured forth in poetry more readily than in prose, especially at an early period of her life.'

She, however, preferred cultivating the reflective and discriminating powers of her mind, to the indulgence of as rich and fanciful an imagination as ever was passed by the most successful competitor for fame in the regions of romance.

Her aim as an authoress had a far higher object. To amend as well as to instruct was her ardent desire; and she wished to build a solid reputation as a writer, on subjects of more enduring interest than the lighter productions of modern literature.

Her first work was historical; it embraced a period of English history, fraught with deep interest to the scholar, and to the English nation generally. It was published in 1827, under the title of 'Memoirs of the Rival Houses of York and Lancaster.' The subject required the exercise of those mental powers which few women have possessed in so eminent a degree. Her vigorous intellect, her acute reasoning, her sound judgment, her strict regard for truth, her nice powers of discrimination in the selection of materials, and her peculiarly retentive memory, already stored with information on almost every subject within the range of modern literature, were all developed in a work which will always find a place in the library of the historian, and rank highly amongst a class of readers who are capable of appreciating the great merits of a work, requiring the most indefatigable industry in collecting and arranging so much voluminous matter, and the equally difficult task of condensing and employing the facts in chronological order, to suit the style and purpose of the proposed work.

The marriage of her only sister, to whom she was most devotedly attached, and from whom she could not endure to be separated, induced her to accompany her to India in 1828, and from this period her versatile genius was confined more particularly to 'Oriental Scenes and Subjects.'

She passed the years of 1829 and 1830, between Etawah, Cawnpore, and Agra, during which time it is needless to repeat that she was highly successful as a writer for various periodical publications, both in poetry and prose.

On returning from the Upper Provinces, amongst other important avocations, she was induced to employ her active mind by editing a newspaper in Calcutta, and the 'Oriental Observer' of 1831, contains many leading articles from her pen, of masculine strength and information.

Her health, however, suffered so materially from the climate, that she yielded to the advice of her medical friends, and returned to Europe; the premature death of her sister having removed the sole object of her residence in India.

Some of her most delightful contributions to the Asiatic Journal were collected and republished in 1835, forming three volumes, containing more real information as to the present state of India, and of Anglo-Indian society, (conveyed in the most agreeable style of composition,) than is to be extracted from more elaborate works, with far more pretending titles than 'The Scenes and Characteristics of Hindostan.'

On her return to Europe her talents were frequently employed in reviewing miscellaneous publications, and not unfrequently in editing, or, in other words, re-writing others —a task for which she was admirably fitted by her acute perception of every species of excellence, as well as by the native generosity and candour of a mind, ever ready to encourage rising talent, when manifested by the most obscure or anonymous writers, whilst her solid judgment was never biassed by the rank or fortune of the author.

Desirous of obtaining personal information on the present condition of a considerable portion of the British possessions in India, which she had been obliged to leave unexplored from ill-health during her former residence in India, she was anxious to leave Europe again, believing that, with her present experience, she might by more judicious precautions avoid the ill effects which the

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climate had formerly produced on her constitution; and with that spirit of enterprize which characterized her, she did not hesitate in accepting a proposition from her publishers to furnish a series of articles for the Asiatic Journals of 1840, which should comprise all the requisite information for a traveller undertaking the journey to India by land, and she left England for this purpose on the 1st of September, 1839. This engagement she fulfilled with her usual ability, and by a singular coincidence the last communication thus stipulated for, appeared in that number of the 'Asiatic Journal' which announced her death.

Soon after her arrival at Bombay she began to collect materials for what she terms in one of her letters '*her great* WORK.' Through the liberal conduct of the Governor, Sir James Carnac, she possessed every facility of obtaining correct statistical information.

The valuable records of all the government offices were placed at her disposal; and to the ardour and perseverance with which she prosecuted her task may be attributed that disregard of her health, which terminated her valuable life at the very time when, yielding to the opinions of her medical advisers, she was on her route homewards, and her friends were indulging the hope of her speedy reappearance in an admiring circle she was so well-calculated to enliven and adorn.

The melancholy event took place at Poonah on the 18th of September, where she arrived in the last stage of exhaustion on the 17th, and was communicated to her friends in England by a gentleman in whose family she had been a most welcome inmate for five months, in nearly the following words:—

'She came to us at Mahableshwar in April last, apparently stout and well: she complained, however, of distressing stomachic symptoms, yet not such as to alarm the medical attendants. These symptoms, however, gradually became worse, and her medical attendant proposed her return to Europe as the only means of prolonging her life.

'Her passage was taken for the steamer on the 31st of October accordingly, and she left Satarra on the 10th of September. On the road to Poonah she was attacked with dysentery, which increased, and proved fatal on the 18th at the house of Colonel Campbell.

'All our comfort is, that everything was done for her whilst with us that could be done by affection, and that her complaint was properly treated and thoroughly understood by the medical attendants. In her loss, myself and family have to mourn that of a beloved friend, for she was endeared to us all by her many amiable and excellent qualities.

'Colonel Campbell will no doubt write further particulars,' &c.

Every tribute of respect to her memory was paid by her private friends, and a few very short extracts from the public journals of Bombay and Calcutta will be gratifying to her friends.

'BOMBAY.—We learn in a letter from Poonah, that the grand state ball, about to be given by Sir J. Carnac on Wednesday last, was postponed on account of the death of Miss Roberts.'—*United Service Gazette.*

'The departure of this excellent and talented lady from this sublunary scene will leave a void in the theatre of Anglo-Indian literature. Her accomplishments were of a varied and extensive range. In depicting Indian scenes, and in descriptions of Indian life, her pencil sketched with truth and fidelity. Its last tints were shed over Mahableshwar, but she did not live to complete the picture. Her remains now rest beside one of her own sex, who in life was also distinguished for her literary talents—we mean Mrs. Fletcher, better known as Miss Jewsbury.'—*Bombay.*

'Just as this highly talented lady was on the eve of departure for her native land, the hand of death came on her, and India and its people are left to mourn a loss they can ill sustain and never too much deplore.'—*Calcutta, Wednesday, Oct. 7th,* 1839.

To speak of her as she deserved requires an abler pen than the one now attempting a slight tribute to departed worth. To those who were not personally acquainted with my estimable friend, the language of truth may be suspected of the most extravagant panegyric; whilst those who were distinguished by her intimate acquaintance, will be fully aware how impossible it is to do justice to those talents she never for one moment displayed at the expense of others less gifted than herself; or to those virtues which procured her the esteem and regard of every one who approached her.

To those whom she distinguished with her friendship the loss is irreparable, for a character containing so many great and good qualities is rarely found. Uniformly kind and considerate for the feelings of others, she obtained the goodwill of many whose envy and malevolence towards superior talent she disarmed by her simple unaffected manners and her extreme good-nature. Her heart was the attraction which drew many around her, who would have been repelled by the great reputation she enjoyed as a successful author.

So extensive was her visiting acquaintance, and composed of so many distinct circles, that it seems wonderful she should have conciliated the good will of so many different classes of society,—many of whom were of different denominations of religion, and of opposite politics.

Yet wherever Miss Emma Roberts appeared she was a welcome guest. In the higher classes of society she was courted and appreciated as she deserved, whilst in every family in which she has ever been an inmate, her loss will long be lamented, as if she had been one of its nearest and dearest relatives. Her manners were frank and cordial, equally removed from the affectation of

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pretending to depreciate her extraordinary talents, as from presuming on her mental superiority.

Ever ready to promote hilarity, she could participate in the joyous revelry of the Christmas fireside, with the heartfelt cheerfulness her presence diffused around, bending her superior intellect to the light occupations of the passing hour, whenever she could contribute to the amusement of the party assembled.

The readiness with which she has been known to furnish dramatic scenes, to be acted privately by some of her friends, proved her genius for dramatic composition, had she chosen to write for the stage.

So expanded were her views, that on one occasion when a friend declared to her that no great interest was excited in her mind, by events that occurred in a remote portion of the globe, (the Eastern Seas were alluded to,) she exclaimed, 'How can you say so? I feel for every living creature on earth, and I can truly say in that respect,

> "My bounty is as boundless as the sea,
> My love as deep; the more I give
> The more I have, for both are infinite."'

This in her was no figure of speech, for her love of children, with whom she was an universal favourite, descended also to the animal species. Yet she was far from affecting a sickly sensibility equally false as absurd in this declaration of universal charity.

So heartily did she rejoice in the success of her literary friends, and so totally free from every species of envy, that nothing gave her greater pleasure than to speak of the merits of her female competitors in the career of fame, and I never heard her make a disparaging remark on any of their productions, unless the faults were too palpable to escape general detection.

Of many of her most successful rivals, she delighted in speaking in the warmest style of panegyric. I remember, in talking with another equally warm admirer of Mrs. Jameson's exquisite writings, she exclaimed, 'If I could envy anybody, I should envy Mrs. Jameson—everything she has done she has done well. Let her choose what subject she will, she elevates and embellishes it. It is as if everything she touches turns immediately to gold.'

A lady present observed that no one could possess greater facility in composition, nor a more pleasing manner of conveying solid information than herself. She replied, 'I cannot express my admiration sufficiently of Mrs. Jameson's *moral* courage in venturing opinions that may draw down the animadversion of a large portion of the society in which she moves. It is a dangerous undertaking to point out the follies and prejudices which exist amongst a class of unreflecting people with many of whom we are in the habits of intercourse. Yet to pursue the beaten tract which so many are content to follow, when the mind is once convinced it is the path of moral injustice, is moral turpitude. Mrs. Jameson has fearlessly attacked the existing prejudices of the multitude, and by the multitude she must expect to be criticised. She had no reason to envy this moral courage she praised so highly, for never was any woman endowed with a more lofty spirit, or more unshaken resolution, in supporting her own opinions, whenever she was called upon to combat in the cause of truth and justice. So unflinching was the support she gave to the weaker side when she was convinced it was the more honourable, that on more than one occasion she has involved herself in disputes with persons whom she had formerly benefited, and who were personally friendly to her, by advocating the cause of a calumniated and defenceless friend. Her lofty disposition disdained the semblance of appearing to acquiesce in false rumours by refraining from expressing her opinion even when she was aware she could be of no service to the injured party, by constituting herself the advocate of the persecuted absent, (and on the contrary involve herself in unavailing disputation.) This was not the effect of a mere Quixotic disposition to redress grievances beyond her power, but proceeded from her strict regard to moral principle and unblemished integrity. This straightforward course did not fail to command the respect and ensure the esteem of the wisest and best; and amongst these she had the happiness of numbering many of her sincerest friends and warmest admirers.

Nothing afforded her greater pleasure than to introduce such of her friends as she imagined were of similar tastes and pursuits to each other, and so much reliance was placed on her opinion, that she possessed a species of 'carte blanche' amongst her most intimate friends, to introduce such of her acquaintance as she believed would be mutually desirous of each other's society.

Many permanent friendships thus formed by her good offices (in their commencement) will now become more closely cemented by the common feeling of regret which her loss has occasioned. It was not unusual for her to go out when overfatigued, or otherwise indisposed for general society, because some young friend could not otherwise have been introduced; the genuine kindness of her disposition was evinced in these minor points, as well as in the more solid proofs she never failed to give of sincere friendship.

Her conversational powers were as brilliant as the kindness of her heart permitted. Too sensitive in her own feelings to be regardless of those of others, she never hazarded an observation that could border on the satirical, and it is very difficult to acquire a reputation for wit, without occasionally sacrificing some portion of good-nature. In conversation, however trifling the topic might be, her remarks were always characterised by her sound sense, and the habits

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of close observation she had formed at an early period of her life.

Her extremely retentive memory, enriched with an immense variety of useful facts, alone supplied a constant fund of information, that rendered her conversation as interesting to the practical man of science, as valuable to the antiquarian; yet she had no tinge of pedantry and no literary affectation, thinking nothing beneath her notice, that conduced to the elegance or comfort of any class of society. She once jestingly remarked that as she was now a species of literary 'maid of all work,' she must necessarily understand something of the culinary arts; she should therefore publish a cookery book. It was thought a jest at the moment, but soon after she did bring out an enlarged edition of Mrs. Rundell (with about seven hundred receipts of her own). Like everything she undertook, her task was well executed, especially if we may judge by the large sum she received for the manuscript, (£300,) for although not always a true criterion of its merit, a pretty fair estimate of the success of a book may be thus obtained.

This constant occupation of the mind affected her general health, and it is to be feared generated those symptoms which had manifested themselves occasionally during the periods of closest application to her literary avocations, but which might have remained incipient for years, had not the climate and the severe mental discipline she underwent at a time when her personal strength was least capable of exertion, accelerated the complaint which terminated so fatally.

The shock to her friends was indeed appalling, few of whom had been aware that any serious cause of alarm existed. She had, however, been more than once prohibited from her ordinary occupation, during the year previous to her departure for India, and by the desire of medical attendants relaxed, at intervals, the severity of her studies, in the society of her friends. On one of these occasions, whilst on a visit in the country, she told an intimate friend that she wanted some books she had never read. On being taken into the library she glanced slightly at the well-stored shelves, and exclaimed playfully, 'Here you have all the best authors, but there is nothing for me to read I do believe,' she continued smiling, 'that I have read every book worth reading in the English language.'

She was asked if she could remember their contents with anything like accuracy. She replied, 'Yes, I could tell where to find anything I wanted in almost any author I ever read once.' This was not said from any desire to assume superior talent, for on the same friend remarking the extreme neatness of her MS., (in which a single alteration or erasure did not appear in many consecutive pages,) she answered that it was merely the effect of long practice in composition, and added, 'You only want the spur of necessity to make you quite as successful as your ambition could desire: with your talents you might acquire as much literary reputation as you please; and as to facility in composition, which you so much admire in my manuscripts, *that* you will find is almost mechanical.'

Her generosity in awarding praise was not the only proof of her extreme liberality of disposition, for although many of the luxuries of life, which to a gentlewoman accustomed to them from her birth, are necessaries, were to be acquired by her own literary exertions, her purse was ever open whenever any claim of pecuniary distress required her aid, and many of her friends refrained from mentioning cases of distress before her, as she was sure to proffer assistance to the full extent of her ability. Time to her was money, yet she never spared it when she could serve a deserving object: she has been known to devote whole days to the benevolent object of promoting subscriptions for the widow of an author too poor to publish his posthumous papers in any other way.

To her intimate friends her heart was as open as her purse was to the unfortunate. She had a tear of sympathy for sorrows that time only could alleviate, and her capacious heart was large enough to receive the sacred trust of confidence reposed in her, without shrinking from the obligations it entailed.

Many a crushed spirit has been revived by her soothing and judicious kindness, and never by look or word did she ever give cause to regret that she had been made the repository of the most secret thoughts of those she professed to love.

Although no longer in the early spring of youth, she had not reached that period of life when the matured judgment too often blunts the feelings to the finest and most delicate shades of susceptibility. She was approaching the meridian of her powers, when the resplendent light of noon sheds its full beams, and exhibits surrounding objects in their true light, undistorted by the brilliant colourings of early youth, or the sombre tints of autumn's experience. In person she was about the middle height; the character of her countenance was expressive of the predominant qualities of her mind. The somewhat prominent eye gave every indication of the fire of genius within, and her fine features were animated by the lofty aspirations of her intellect. Her handsome face was remarkable for its intelligence, and few women could boast of her powers of attracting the best and most valuable from the idlers composing the mass of general society. Yet amidst all her solid acquirements there was an under current of romance flowing from the inmost recesses of her heart, (which those whom she best loved knew yet existed,) in all its gushing freshness, although her keen sense of the ridiculous prevented her from displaying its depth and intensity.

Such was the high-souled woman her friends, and they were numerous, have to

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deplore; but her memory will ever be enshrined in the bosoms of those she loved, and embalmed by the tears of those she valued.

To speak of her as she deserved, and to convey some idea of what she was as an authoress, a woman, and a friend, is indeed difficult—whole pages might be lavished on the different qualities of her head and heart, which rendered her so dear to all. A few extracts from some of her letters to those friends with whom she corresponded during her sojourn in the East, will give more insight of her character than volumes of panegyric,—and the details of her journey, its objects, and the spirit of enterprize she manifested in the undertaking, are narrated by herself, up to the fatal period of her last communication for the 'Asiatic Journal' of December, 1840.

It is not too much to say of her, that if in vigour of intellect, in sound understanding, in unflinching courage, in unbiassed judgment, in steady perseverance, and in solid information, her mind partook of qualities supposed to belong more exclusively to masculine intellects, she possessed the quick perceptions, the ardent feelings, the acute susceptibility, the tenderness, truth, and elevation of an affectionate heart, with the purity and refinement of the best portion of her own sex, and combined in her own person the highest and most desirable qualities of a man without losing the endearing and most valuable characteristics of a woman.

'Government House, Parell, Dec. 31.

'My Dear Mrs. R.,

* * * *

'I am delightfully situated at present, being domesticated at Government House, with Sir James and Lady Carnac, where we enjoy somewhat of the pomp and state of sovereignty, without any of the annoyances. Yesterday I assisted, as the phrase runs, upon a very interesting occasion, the departure of Sir Henry Fane, to whom the Governor, upon his embarkation for England, paid all the honours. The whole of the troops were drawn out, lining the road along a wide plain to the beach. Miss Carnac and myself, in a pretty open carriage drawn by two white Arabs, led the way, followed by Lady Carnac, with gold sticks, and then came Sir Henry and his staff, with a cloud of cavalry for an escort, all the officers not on duty in the line, mounted, and in full uniforms. The 15th Hussars, headed by Sir Walter Scott, by some mistake presented arms to Miss Carnac and myself, which amused us very much. I ought to be, and suppose that I am, very much delighted with the novelty and gaiety of the life I lead, and but for the recollection of friends at home, friends with whom I may never renew the unreserved intercourse which formerly proved so delightful, I should have no desires ungratified.

'The party assembled here is a very agreeable one; the Misses Carnac, in addition to great natural accomplishments being lively unaffected girls, who evince a great partiality for my society; there is also a ward who is an heiress, a Miss S——, a very sweet person indeed, a military and private secretary, two aides-de-camp and visitors, Lord Jocelyn, Sir Henry Darrell, and young Bert, and some others of inferior note, besides myself. I have been much pleased with the attentions of Sir Henry Fane, and Sir Walter Scott, both of whom appear to take a great interest in my travels. Sir Walter is to me a very captivating person, a true son of his father, his observations being exactly those that you might expect from a man brought up at Abbotsford, and though one of the most unpretending and unaffected men I ever met with, it is easy to recognise the tone of mind which his early associations were likely to produce. Lady Scott is very amiable, Lord Jocelyn is gifted with very excellent qualities, and he and I were good friends before we met at Parell: he has a poetical turn, and has written some very pretty verses, suggested by Lady Blessington, of whom he speaks much, and with sincere admiration.

'I am writing now in an apartment at the top of the house, which commands a view over a beautiful garden, less formal than is usually to be found in Asia, though there are broad terraces, straight wide walks, parterres planted with the utmost regularity, cypresses, palms, plantains, with their stately plumes, and other trees, together with a magnificent background relieving the eye, and producing a delightful variety. We talk of getting up some charades, and if you were here it would be speedily accomplished; but I cannot take the direction on myself, though willing to assist. Here are large parties at least twice a week, and cards and dancing *ad libitum*, our own circle being sufficiently large to enable us to waltz or gallope; in short, to do what we please. There is an excellent band attached to the establishment, and Miss Carnac sings exquisitely. I shall recommence my travels shortly, but have not yet quite decided which way I shall bend my steps, having had several invitations equally tempting. I shall have seen enough of Bombay in the course of another month, nobody staying here if they can help it in the hot weather. Remember me most kindly to all my friends.

'Most affectionately yours,

'Emma Roberts.'

'Sindoolah College, April 26, 1840.

'My dear Friend,

* * * * *

I am not unhappy; I should be extremely ungrateful if I were, under the hospitable roof of kind friends, to give way to feelings of discontent; but I long to return *home* to those that I love and have left. I am staying with Mrs. O——, a very nice person, both handsome and refined in her manners; her husband is the resident at the court of the Rajah of Sattora; and we leave Mahablesh-

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war together in the early part of June for this place, where I remain during the rains, which will last until September, and then return to Bombay, on my way back to Egypt.

'I do not write for any newspaper at present. Mr. —— wished me to come round to Bengal, but such a journey would not answer my purpose in the least; beside, I have enough to do in collecting materials for my great work, and, indeed, have injured my health by employing myself too sedulously in making extracts, &c.

'The symptoms of my present complaint have often shown themselves before, but never in such excess. I am suffering from irritability in the nerves of the stomach, which is attended with a perfect craving, and at the same time such a loathing of food, that I can scarcely eat anything. Violent paroxysms of sickness come on when the stomach is empty, and the moment that I swallow anything that disagrees with the morbid state of the interior, I feel as if I were poisoned. I am one day better—another worse. It is unfortunate, that while in this state I am obliged to work so hard, but there is no remedy; the despatch of the steamer has filled my hands for several days, and this week one of the secretaries of Goa, at the desire of Sir James Carnac, gave me a volume of manuscript reports upon a very interesting subject, of which I had to extract the pith in as short a time as possible. My state of health furnishes me with a good reason for staying away from many parties.

'The hills at this time resemble some small watering-place, at which all the neighbourhood for miles assemble. The governor and family, and the commander-in-chief, are all up here. We have a band playing three times a week to waken the echoes of these wild hills.

'Some people's heads would have been so turned as never to have come back again had they assisted at so many grand occasions as have lately fallen to my lot. I shall have more of this at the Rajah's court, but I value these accidents at just as much as they are worth, and no more; however, I shall be glad to find myself on the back of an elephant again. I like the Carnac family very much, and have received, and still continue to receive, the kindest attentions from them. (I won twenty-two points at whist of the commander-in-chief the other night, when I was able to dine out. I need not ask you if you remember *our* little reunions and rubbers. I cannot bear to think we shall never meet again under the same roof. Poor dear Mrs. —— has indeed been a loss to me.) God bless you!

'Affectionately yours,

'Emma Roberts.'

Want of space prevents the insertion of several other interesting extracts.

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THE METROPOLITAN.

No. CXVIII.

FEBRUARY, 1841.

THE BLUE BELLES OF ENGLAND.*

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER V.

FISHING FOR GUDGEON, AND GETTING A BITE.

At as early an hour on the following morning as it was possible for an extremely fine gentleman to show himself, Sir James Ridley called upon his sister. He had received a gay, good-humoured epistle from her within the day after the final settlement of accounts with her guardians, by which he learnt, as quite a matter-of-course event, that she was immediately coming to town with Mrs. Hartley. His first movement on reading this was a disposition to bluster a little, and he actually took up a pen and began a reply to the letter, which opened thus:—

'*This will not do at all, my dear Constance;*' when, happily for *la belle harmonie* which at present subsisted between them, he recollected that Constance had become her own mistress since last he had the pleasure of writing to her, and that it would be very foolishly compromising his own dignity if he entered into a discussion which might end by an overt declaration on her part that thenceforward she intended to have her own way. Not being greatly given to reasoning upon character, he wasted no speculations upon the motives which, for the last year or two, had led Constance to be so passively obedient to his commands, but, seizing the inference which lay on the surface, he brought himself to the desirable conclusion, that though the sudden change from minor to major might have put this freak into her head, yet that her temper and disposition would not be eventually changed by it, and that he should still be able to dispose of her in marriage according to his own wish and wisdom—a privilege which he was quite aware would add considerably to his consequence, and of which he had, in fact, boasted not very sparingly, under the appearance of complaining that so heavy a responsibility was thrown upon him.

He determined therefore, to refrain from all reproof upon the present occasion; to receive her, on her arrival, with the most condescending kindness; and by mixing a good deal in Mrs. Hartley's set, which (though rather too literary for his taste and his notions of perfect *bon ton*,) was a very good one, to take effectual care that no pretender to her hand should approach too nearly without his leave and licence.

'How very amiable this is of you, my dear Mrs. Hartley!' he said, as soon as the welcoming fraternal embrace was over. 'It is so exactly the very thing I could have wished for my sister! She is now arrived at an age when, in my judgment, she must be capable of essentially benefiting by such an introduction as you will give her, which I really did not think was the case before. The propriety of times and seasons should, in my opinion, be the study of all men—nothing is so important.' Then turning to the three Misses Hartley, he condescended to speak to them all individually, which was what he rarely did to young unmarried ladies, unless, for some reason or other, they were pre-eminently the fashion.

As Sir James Ridley had rather a handsome

* Continued from p. 15.

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face, a good person, an admirable tailor, the power of making 'any Joan my lady,' and seven or eight thousand a-year, all he *did* say to young ladies was generally very kindly received; and if his immoderate admiration of himself had required aught beside his inward meditations to strengthen it, he might have found enough in the welcome with which his dull platitudes were received, and the gentle glances which met his leaden eyes whichever way he turned them.

The three Misses Hartley were no exception to this general rule, and all smiled upon him, as he gave them a little speech a-piece, in the most obliging manner possible. Yet there was, two to one, less deep and deliberate design in their civility than was usually the case in families where youthful females abounded—for only one of them had made up her mind to marry him. The eldest was civil to him wholly and solely because he was the brother of Constance; the youngest, wholly and solely because he waltzed tolerably well, and because the management of all her affairs together (dressing as if she had three times the income allowed her included) gave her less trouble than getting, at all the balls throughout the season, as much waltzing as she liked. But Margaretta, the second sister, really intended to be Lady Ridley, a purpose which she very foolishly stated to her mother, when the subject of Miss Ridley's accompanying them to town had been first canvassed in a tête-à-tête consultation between them. The final decision they then came to, had been arrived at in this wise:—

'So; Penelope wants Constance Ridley to be invited again this year. What do you think about it, Margaret?' said the mother.

'I think as I did last year—that it is very desirable she should come,' replied the daughter.

'You should not forget, Margaret, that the girl is certainly growing handsomer every day. Of course I should make her pay something, as I told you last year, (but let this be strictly *entre nous*); yet I doubt if it would be quite prudent to have her. Remember, my dear, that the brightness of her very fine eyes is considerably aided by being ever looked at side by side with the *beaux yeux de sa casselle*; and may not both together be apt to throw you and Caroline into the background? As to Penelope, I am determined, if possible, never to think of her again as a marriageable person. I can never forgive—oh! never—her refusing Mr. Tufton Bossett—such a connection! But I am not talking of her—I never want to talk of her again—it is you and Caroline that I am thinking of. May not this handsome, well-portioned girl be in your way?'

'Decidedly, mamma. There can be no doubt about it. She must be very much in our way, and a monstrous bore upon a thousand occasions. But I know your constant kindness to me, mamma, too well, to doubt that you will agree, as Caroline is only just twenty, to overlook for one season any little drawback it may be to her, when I tell you that I think this visit from Constance Ridley might be extremely advantageous to me.'

'Most assuredly, my dear love; I would willingly overlook Caroline's chance for one season, or two either, if doing so could be an advantage to you. But how would this be so?'

'You know, mamma, as well as I do, or better too perhaps, that *opportunity* in all these things is worth more than beauty, talent, grace, fashion, or anything else in the world, (except money!)—and Miss Ridley's being with us will decidedly give us *opportunity*. I have never mentioned it to you before, mamma, because hitherto I have always felt that it was impossible to set about the thing to any purpose; but if Constance comes to us, I shall, of course, have all the opportunity I wish for—for the fact is, that I want to marry her brother.'

'Do you really, my love? Do you mean that you have taken any particular fancy for him, Margaret?'

'O dear no, mamma!—not the least in the world! I have never, thank heaven, had any such nonsense as that in my head since I was sixteen, when Sir William Morris, whom I should now think old enough to be my father, told me one day, before anybody else was come down to dinner, that I was very handsome. I fell in love with him instantly, and used to write 'Caroline Morris' all over the margin of my French exercises, and then pass my finger over it, that it might not be read. This lasted, I think, for above a fortnight; and since then I have never been the victim of any tender passion whatever. But don't you think, dear mamma, that Ridley would be an excellent *partie* for me?'

'Capital, Margaretta, capital! It really seems, dearest love, as if a pitying Providence had sent you to console me for all I have suffered about Penelope. There she is, at twenty-four—we call it twenty-four, Margaret, but we know in our hearts that she wants but three weeks of twenty-five—there she is, growing larger, I am quite positive of it, every day of her life, and with no more chance of getting another Tufton Bossett than of being empress of Russia. But I never will turn a thought towards her again; you shall be, as you most justly deserve, my first object throughout the whole of the next season; and it is impossible, sweet love, that we could either of us wish for anything better than Sir James Ridley. But tell me, my own darling—have you any reason to think that he admires you?'

'Not the least in the world, mamma. You must not set off with any such notion as that, or we shall get all wrong. No; the history of my selection is nearly this:—our gossiping Anne told me one day, when she was dressing my hair, that she had been at a tea-drinking the night before, in the servants'

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hall at Appleby Hut, and that Sir James Ridley's valet had been entertaining the ladies' maids with histories of his master's hard-heartedness—for that "he would not take up with none of the five ladies *that makes so much of him.*" "But by what I can make out, ma'am," added the sagacious Mrs. Anne, "the young gentleman has got too many buzzing about him to ever trouble himself about catching one." Now it strikes me that there is a great deal of good sense in this observation, mamma, and that any girl of tolerable pretensions, who had more *opportunity* than the rest, would be very likely to succeed. Now, having his sister with us *must* give an immense deal of opportunity, because he might be invited on her account early and late—morning, noon, and night—without any sort of suspicion arising to put him on his guard. In short, at any rate, I cannot help thinking it is worth trying; and both you and I, dearest mamma, have tact enough to prevent any one's being the wiser, in case we fail.'

'My darling girl!—how fondly do I love you!' exclaimed Mrs. Hartley, greatly touched, and throwing her arms round her daughter's neck. 'I shall be ungrateful to heaven and to you, my own sweet Margaret, if I ever call myself an unfortunate mother again.'

* * * * *

This short retrospect will put the reader *au fait* as to Sir Charles Ridley's reception in Bruton Street, and supersede the necessity of any subsequent explanations.

'How I love to see you two together!' said Mrs. Hartley, looking with a sentimental air at Sir James, who was leaning over the table to examine a purse upon which his sister was employed. 'It is so beautiful to see how Constance looks up to you!—such an exquisite mixture of love and respect! It is quite perfect!—oh! perfect.'

Sir James looked quite affectionately in the face of his sister; but her eyes were fixed upon her work, so that he could not very plainly discern the expression of which Mrs. Hartley had spoken; but he entertained not the least doubt in the world of the fact—'Mrs. Hartley was one of the cleverest women in London—besides, it was so natural!'

The party were all animated. Their opening campaign was descanted upon, and Sir James appealed to on all points of fashionable information as such undoubted authority, that he waxed more and more amiable every moment—nay, he even condescended to confess, when Constance showed him her card from Lady Dort, that he should rather like to make that woman's acquaintance, though she was such an awful quiz herself, because, somehow or other, she certainly contrived to fill her rooms remarkably well. 'They say she had three duchesses last week upon one sofa, with three ambassadors standing before them. Now that's first-rate, or the devil's in it,' said Sir James, lashing his boot with his riding-whip, and looking round the little circle for applause.

'My dear Sir James, will you let me show you a gem of art that I have just had presented to me? I know that you are celebrated for your exquisite taste'—and as she spoke, Mrs. Hartley rose from her chair, and led the way into another drawing-room.

In many houses where three young ladies had been, the moment before, talking at full speed to a young baronet, apparently well inclined to listen to them, it is possible that one or two among them would have found it civil and proper to follow their mamma in such a movement as that made by Mrs. Hartley; but her daughters knew better. The system of secret conferences, so invaluable in all diplomatic transactions, was to her perfectly indispensable. She would probably have abandoned society altogether, in despair and disgust, had she been deprived of this means of carrying on her operations in it. The three Misses Hartley knew this, and acted accordingly; so that she immediately found herself in the enjoyment of a *tête-à-tête* with Sir James, a small cast from the antique in each of their hands, and their backs turned towards the rest of the company.

'There is one thing, Sir James,' said the lady, 'which I feel that I owe it to myself to say to you. I shall speak without the least reserve, for frankness is too essentially my nature for me to be able to throw it off, even if I would. Your charming sister is the darling and delight of us all; yet I cannot but feel that I have undertaken a great responsibility in bringing her with us to town. With her beauty, talents, fortune, and connexions, we know but too well, Sir James, that she must immediately become an object of attention, and, alas! of pursuit to many, whom we may by no means desire should succeed. Under these circumstances, there is but one possible way of making me feel easy about her, and that is, your promising to be as much with her as your other engagements will permit. Who is there, dearest Sir James, so proper to dictate to her as yourself? At what a very early age did your illustrious father select you as one of her personal guardians!—a proof amply sufficient, if any such were wanted, that it is you, and you only, who ought to have the disposal of her in marriage. Do I make myself understood? And may I hope that, for her sake, you will pass a portion of every day in her society?'

'Mrs. Hartley, I am very much obliged to you,' he replied. 'You prove yourself a real friend by what you now say to me. I am quite aware that I ought to look after Constance myself, and that, if she marries at all, it must be a husband of my choosing. One thing, which I have the satisfaction of being perfectly sure of, may lessen both your anxiety and mine, and that is, that Constance has the highest possible opinion of my judgment, and would, I am quite positive, give up the strongest attachment that ever was formed, at my bidding,' replied the baronet, in a confidential whisper.

'Thank God!' said Mrs. Hartley, fervent-

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ly. 'Then I have not deceived myself in thinking that if we can get you among us we shall be perfectly safe. You will, then, I trust, my dear Sir James, make this sacrifice for the sake of your beautiful sister. Dine with us every day, if you can; I know it must be a sacrifice; but such a mind as yours will not want its reward while making it.'

'Yes, Mrs. Hartley, it certainly will be a sacrifice: for the fact is, I am devilishly in request just at present,' replied Sir James, too completely occupied by himself to be in the least degree aware of the rudeness of which he was guilty. But nevertheless, you may rely upon me. I shall think it my duty to come, and therefore I will do it.'

'Dearest Sir James! How I reverence you!' said Mrs. Hartley, slightly pressing her delicate handkerchief to her still handsome eyes. 'Would to heaven my own poor girls were blessed with such a brother! Ah! you know not how thankful I should be for a little of your invaluable advice, now and then, about them. Poor things! strange to say, they are thought exceedingly pretty; and you can have no conception what a multitude of proposals I was pestered with last year for the two eldest. Caroline is but a child in years; still, though, dear young thing, I let her go out with the others, because she is so tall as not to make it remarkable—and the poor puss does so adore dancing! But let me not detain you talking of them. You dine with us, then, to-day, Sir James? Will seven suit you? or would you wish it later?'

'No; seven will do very well, thank you. It is not very often that I keep anybody waiting for dinner. The medical men tell me that my remarkably regular appetite is owing to my being so particularly active and well made. I don't mention it as a matter of beauty, of course, but merely as a medical fact; devilish bad taste for a man to talk of his own beauty, let him be ever so handsome—isn't it, Mrs. Hartley?' and the baronet laughed, as a man does laugh who knows that he has said something witty.

'Shall I own the truth to you, Sir James?' returned Mrs. Hartley, with a half-timid, half-confiding look. 'Perhaps it may be rather a peculiar whim of mine, but the fact is, that I rather like to hear people speak simply and sincerely of the advantages they possess. Mercy on me, why should a man be ashamed of being handsome? Depend upon it, my dear friend, that it is only very silly, weak-minded people, who are afraid to speak well of themselves. Margaret and I were exactly comparing notes on this point only this very morning, and we both agreed that we adored a frank, manly character, that feared not to avow an honest and sincere consciousness of noble qualities.'

'I agree with you, with all my heart and soul, my dear madam,' returned Sir James, with great energy. 'And I only wish that the old lady at Appleby Hut could hear. You have no notion what nonsense she talks on that very subject. If one does but hint that one does not think oneself a fool, she looks as if she was ready to die at the sight of so much conceit. Cursed nonsense, isn't it?—and calculated to do a devilish deal of harm to poor Constance.'

'Lamentable! most lamentable!' returned Mrs. Hartley, shaking her head dismally, and assuming a look of grave concern. 'But let us trust that the present interval may be beneficial—Constance will hear no such pernicious nonsense here. But *apropos* of Constance—you will dine with us on Monday, of course, and I hope you will permit me to introduce you at Lady Dort's soirée.'

'I have no objection whatever, if you wish it,' replied Sir James, in a tone of the most patronizing condescension.

'Wish it!—do I wish it? and Constance to be introduced to a large circle for the first time in her life! O, Sir James! can you doubt my wishing it?'

'O, I shall certainly go; I did not mean to make the least objection. But now I must wish you good morning, for my friend Marsh will be waiting for me. A capital good fellow that, by-the-bye, a monstrous fortune, they say. Perhaps you will let me introduce him here some day?'

'Perhaps! Oh! do not say perhaps! Are you not at home here, dearest Sir James! Any friend of yours will be most welcome.'

The baronet then took his leave, familiarly nodding to the four young ladies as he passed through the room where they were, and only distinguishing his sister from the rest by chucking her rather briskly under the chin, and saying, 'What the devil makes you poke so, Constance?'

Constance was poking, as he elegantly termed it, because she was ill at ease, and hung her head as she sat meditating on all the nonsense which she doubted not her brother had been uttering during his ominously long tête-à-tête with Mrs. Hartley. Of that lady she, in truth, stood exceedingly in awe, believing her to be possessed of exactly all the wisdom in which she was herself conscious of being deficient, and she greatly disliked the idea of her brother's becoming an object of the shrewd and caustic remarks which it was Mrs. Hartley's wont to utter. Of his diminutive intellect and enormous vanity poor Constance was as fully aware as that acute lady herself could be; and she would have prevented this favourable opportunity for the display of both, if she could have managed it; but when she had ventured to say to her friend Penelope, 'Do let us go in, and see what they are so long about,' that young lady replied by laying her hand firmly upon the arm of her imprudent friend to prevent her rising, and saying—'Not for the world, Constance!—you must *never* break in upon mamma's tête-à-têtes.'

But never were sisterly fears more completely thrown away. The impression made by Sir James Ridley upon Mrs. Hartley during this interview was more than favourable—it was enchanting. She had pre-

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viously conceived a tolerably accurate notion of his peculiar merits, and had hit off with considerable skill the salient points of attack in his character; but all she had suspected before, she now felt to be fully proved, and she reseated herself at her work-frame with somewhat of the pleasant feeling experienced by a general who has been carefully examining the ground before a battle, and found out completely to his satisfaction where were the points of vantage.

CHAPTER VI.

CONSTANCE'S DEBUT—MR. MORTIMER.

It is rather an agitating business for any young lady to dress herself for the first large party at which she has ever appeared, and to Constance Ridley it was more so than to the generality; for though she had attained the mature age of twenty-one, she was as new to every business of the kind as she had been at fifteen. She had too a thousand thoughts flitting through her brain as she prepared herself for the party at Lady Dort's, which would never have harassed the nerves of a mere girl; and though they were for the most part exceedingly agreeable, they sufficed to agitate her so effectually, that she had but a very vague and imperfect idea of what her maid, assisted by the counsels of Mrs Bridges, was doing with her. She knew that she was to see, to meet, and to be in the same room with, at least a score of the persons whom of all the world she most desired to see, to meet, and be in the same room with, and if the gods would grant her prayers, to hear them too. As to the triumvirate of duchesses mentioned by her brother, she bestowed not a thought upon them; nor did the triumvirate of ambassadors create much greater interest. But there was to be Rolers, the tasteful, the witty, the accomplished; and Miller, the learned, the refined, the holy; and Lodhart, the tranquil master of a mighty pen, that has power to range from the profoundest tenderness of fictitious passion, to the measured lore of truthful biography, the gentle eloquence of domestic affection, or the stupendous strength of scourging criticism; and Meer, the poet—poet in all things; poet in prettiness, poet in pathos, poet in politics, poet in passion, poet in pettishness;—fictitious, perhaps, in all, but still a poet: looking at, nature through a prism, that tints all things with the glowing, changing, playful, fitful colouring of his own rich fancy; and flashing athwart the dull twilight of ordinary life, like the startling streams of the aurora borealis, which seem to breathe forth light as a necessary condition of their existence. She was told also that she would be sure to see the giant of the single stroke, who stepped forth once, and seemed to say to the whole reading world, 'I can, an' if I would'—he who has held up bits of human nature, and exhibited them to the world through a microscope of his own invention, that shows every tiny fibre distinctly, yet magnifies nothing—who, turning from an official desk, can dart his piercing eye into the very soul of man, and write him down as none but a philosopher can see him: and a lengthening list of other names followed each in a sort of feverish excitement that lent rouge to her cheek and fire to her eye.

'Pray, miss, look at the sit of this beautiful white rose,' said Mrs. Bridges, rather outraged at the passive indifference with which Constance sat in her chair, without ever once turning her head, or straining her neck to get a peep at what was going on upon the exterior of her pericranium. 'I don't think I ever put a flower in so well since I first took to dressing hair. It's just a model. But you don't seem to care overmuch how you look.'

'O but I do, Mrs. Bridges!' cried Constance, starting up and placing herself before the glass. 'I do care very much indeed. But, O dear, Bridges! How red I look! What can be the reason of it? How very, very unfortunate! I never saw anything so frightful!'

'I can't say I see anything very frightful about it, miss,' returned the waiting-woman. 'I think you look a deal handsomer than ever I saw you before, and the worst anybody could say would be, perhaps, that you had got on a little rouge.'

'Rouge! The worst! How can you try to frighten me so, Mrs. Bridges! I am sure nothing in the world should induce me to leave the house, much as I wish to go to Lady Dort's, if I thought that anybody would suspect me of rouging. I should be shocked at it anywhere; but there!—O, Bridges! what can I do to get rid of it?'

'Why, just sit down, miss, quietly, while I go and give a finishing look at the young ladies. Anne is a very clever young woman, but my mistress always dresses early for large parties, that I may look to the last pins myself. And I will go to them now, if you will just keep yourself quiet to bring down this fine flush, as you don't like it, and your own maid can do all the rest; only I will come back again to give you one general look, as we call it.'

Constance was well pleased to have this respite, and did sit down, and as far as lay within her power reduced the superabundant activity of her spirits. The plan succeeded, the flush subsided into her usual tint of clear pale olive, and when she descended to the drawing-room her brother vouchsafed to confess that her snow-white dress became her well.

But though the whole party were assembled none seemed in haste to go; and the event which appeared to her by far the most important that had ever crossed her path, was plainly to them a matter of no moment at all.

'Did not you say about eleven, Penelope?' she whispered to her friend.

'Eleven? Eleven what, my dear?' return-

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ed Miss Hartley, who was very evidently thinking of something else.

'Nay, do not quiz me, Penelope. I mean that I thought it was time to go.'

'And so it is, dear Constance, and we shall go directly, I have no doubt—that is as soon as we have had some tea.'

'Are you going to take tea before you go?' said the ignorant Constance, with a look of dismay. 'Do you not suppose that they are all there by this time?'

'All there! What, all Lady Dort's company? O dear no. Many of them will not look in till after midnight, except indeed those that may be going to Lady Alridge's ball, and they will make their salams *en passant*. But, Constance—I do not know you—I would never have believed it possible that you should have felt such vehement impatience to find yourself in the midst of such a strange crowd amongst whom you will probably not know one single soul.'

'That is hardly a fair description of what I feel, Penelope,' replied the novice colouring. 'I do not exactly feel as if I were going among strangers.'

'No! You astonish me! Whom do you expect to meet that you ever saw before?'

'No one,' returned Constance, laughing. 'But have you forgotten the description your mother gave us the other evening of the company we might expect to find?'

'No, no, no, I remember it all now,' replied Penelope with a sigh. 'How I envy you, Constance! I would give the world to feel as you do now. But the day is past for me, when the idea of meeting celebrated people could cause emotion of any sort; looking at them I mean merely *du coté de leur célébrité*.'

'And why so? Is it that you have weighed, and found them wanting?'

'By no means; but the only real good to be derived from such association has never been within my reach; and as to enlisting myself as a glimmer in the tail of a comet, I have no wish for it. I believe that I am, unfortunately, *blazée* beyond my years, concerning all things appertaining to fashionable life; yet, even now, I think that I could dearly value an introduction to the *minds* of some of the illustrious bodies you will see tonight. But I believe this to be considerably more beyond my reach than getting admission to the mosques of Constantinople.'

'I am too ignorant to understand you,' replied Constance, slightly contracting her beautiful brows, and looking puzzled.

'And I am both a sinful and silly woman for wishing to forestall the light of nature,' said her friend. 'It will inevitably come upon you, my dear, in process of time, and, like everything else, will be more valuable, if permitted to ripen in its natural course, than if forced prematurely.'

'But this forbearing wisdom comes too late now. You have taken me out of blissful innocence without giving me a single twig of your tree of knowledge to atone for it; and therefore I do beg and entreat you to tell me what you mean.'

'I am quite certain, Constance, that any gentleman on whom you might confer the honour of a command this evening would declare that it was impossible to refuse you anything. Your dress is absolutely perfect, and you really do look beautiful!' was the reply Miss Hartley made, looking at her friend, as she said it, with an air of genuine and well-pleased admiration.

'Now, Penelope, I understand you—I understand you perfectly. The sin and folly of which you accuse yourself refers to the blunder you made in speaking to me as if I had sufficient intellect to comprehend you. You now see your error, and relent,' said Constance, looking very grave.

'Nay, "you *will* have it then," as the forbearing Mr. Dirk Hateraick said to the too persevering Glossin,' replied Miss Hartley; 'you will positively insist upon being *disenchantée*. But you must really wait till another opportunity, for I hear the carriage at the door, and all the waiting our horses are permitted to get is when we are returning from a party, (if it happens to go well,) and not when we are going to it.'

There was indeed evidently no farther leisure for conversation, for Mrs. Hartley, who had been engaged in apparently a very interesting conversation with Sir James Ridley, now rose, and gave the signal for departure.

Sir James Ridley's carriage was in waiting, and a sudden flash of liberality and politeness induced him to say, 'Mercy on me! Here are five of you! Can I be of any use? Shall I take Constance?'

With her usual rapid perception of ultimate results, and widely awake to the advantage of every circumstance which could increase the union of the parties, Mrs. Hartley replied, 'Thank you a thousand times. I will not refuse aid in such an emergency. Five in a carriage built for four *is* a calamity. But who is there but you, Sir James, who would have thought of it? To my philosophy there is nothing in all this wondrous world so marvellous as the difference between man and man. You will go with your brother, my dear Miss Ridley, and I congratulate you heartily on the blessing of possessing him.'

No objection of course could be made on the part of Constance; and, thus divided, the party set off for the mansion of Lady Dort in Curzon Street.

'Soh! Here we are, little lady, cheek by jowl, in the gay streets of London,' said Sir James, after springing into the carriage with a degree of vehemence that made it swing from side to side for many minutes after it set off. 'How do you like it, my dear?'

'It is rather too soon, brother, for me to pass judgment on the great city. All I can say is, that the shops are beautiful, and that I am very glad I am here.'

'How devilish like a woman that is! But

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take care, miss, that you don't fancy you have seven thousand a-year to spend, because I happen to have it; your little squeezy weezy income will melt away here, like butter before the sun, if you take it in your silly little head to fall in love with the shops. I must just look after you a little, and take care you don't run in debt; for upon my life and soul, I will never pay a farthing for you if you do.'

'I don't think I shall run in debt, James,' replied Constance, quietly.

'That's all very well. But I'll tell you what you must do, Miss Constance,' replied her brother, crossing his long legs, and throwing himself sideways in the carriage so as to bring his suspended foot in contact with her knee; 'you must do your best to get an establishment which may enable you to turn a longing eye at the beautiful shops you talk of, without danger. Behave well, and do in all ways as I would have you, and it may be that I may lend a helping hand to the business; and upon my life and soul, my dear, it is no joke having to look after a good marriage in these days. Every fellow worth catching is hooked the very hour he shows himself, and before too, I dare say; and I can tell you pretty tolerably well from experience, that a man who has sense enough to be worth having, is devilish hard to be caught. Egad, I'll defy all the women in London, old or young, to catch me. I know well enough what they are about, one and all of them, from Devonshire Place to Whitehall, and from Burlington Gardens to Belgrave Square. But forewarned is forearmed, and I shall keep my seven thousand for myself a good while longer, I can tell them. Nevertheless, difficult as the job may be, I don't much fear managing it for you, if you behave well. You are not ugly, and thirty thousand pounds is better than nothing. The most intimate friend I have is as rich, or richer, I believe, than I am. He is a capital fellow, and there are few things, I do really think, that he would not do to please me. But I would not let you marry him, if you were twenty times my sister, unless I saw that you conducted yourself well, and appeared good-looking and fashionable enough to deserve him.'

'I am very much obliged to you, brother,' replied Constance demurely, 'but I would not wish you to give yourself any trouble about it just at present, because I do not feel at all in a hurry as yet.'

'No, no, my dear. You speak very sensibly. Marsh isn't a fellow to be driven that way, full speed. You may depend upon my managing it all properly. And indeed I shall not bring it about just at present, or for some weeks to come perhaps, if it were only for the sake of your seeing a little more of such a woman as Mrs. Hartley. I declare, upon my life and soul, that I think she is, without exception, the most thoroughly sensible and well-informed woman I ever met with. She is a perfect model, that woman. No one can suspect *her* of wishing to flirt, or set her cap at me, I suppose; for, handsome as she is, she knows well enough that she is old enough to be my mother; but she sees that, young or old, I am no fool, and she likes my conversation just because—she likes it—which, to my feelings, is a devilish deal more flattering than if she were fool enough to fall in love with me.'

'I am glad you do not think Mrs. Hartley is in love with you, James. I really think you do her only justice there,' said Constance.

'Let me alone, my dear, for finding out people's motives and meanings. I would not sing second to any man breathing on that point. But here we are—in the string at last, but there's a devilish lot before us.'

Constance looked out, and perceived that some six or seven carriages had still to set down before that of Mrs. Hartley, which was immediately before Sir James's, could get up. Her heart throbbed as every onward jerk showed her that an obstacle was removed, and she soon found herself in Lady Dort's vestibule, where Mrs. Hartley and her daughters were waiting for her.

'I shall take care of *you*, my dear,' said Mrs. Hartley, giving her arm to Constance, after arranging with ostentatious care the ends of the ribands that depended from her gloves. 'My girls must follow. Penelope, do take care of Caroline—she is such a child. Sir James, you must take pity, dear friend, upon my forsaken Margaret. In general, I always take care of her myself, and that is the reason, you know, why she is always called my pet.'

This judicious arrangement made, Mrs. Hartley moved on; and the moment after, Constance heard her own name, as well as those of the rest of the party, proclaimed by stentorian lungs from the hall to the landing-place, and from the landing-place to the drawing-room door.

Had Constance remembered the passage in the 'Morning Post,' or, remembering it, believed that it could have made her an object of interest and curiosity to many in the crowded room she was now entering, she would have looked much less beautiful, and incomparably less graceful than she did; but she yielded herself without grimace of any kind to the onward movement of her chaperon, and raising her splendid eyes to look out for those she was longing to see, presented a countenance radiant with expression, and unshadowed by any species of anxiety about herself.

There be many who assert—and, one and all, they are incontrovertibly right—that an expressive countenance is infinitely more fascinating than a merely handsome one; and it would be more profitable to mammas, anxious for the success of their fair daughters, to set them studying the causes and *matériel* of expression, than to call their attention to all the music-masters, dancing-masters, or dressmakers in the world. A long and very instructive essay might easily enough be written upon this theme, but time

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and place do not cohere for it just now, and I must therefore content myself with observing that a young lady, when thinking of *herself*, cannot possibly exhibit a countenance of so much varied and interesting expression, as when she is thinking of other people, and of other things.

The effect produced by Constance, as she was thus led through Lady Dort's elegant drawing-rooms, was extremely favourable, and, in fact, quite decisive as to the station she was to fill in the circles of the season. From that time forth she was pronounced to be 'a very lovely girl indeed'—a sentence from which, for some metaphysical reason or other, even the ladies did not in general seem disposed to appeal—which might, perhaps, be owing in part to the evident indifference of the fair novice herself upon the subject.

Many were the *lorgnettes* directed towards her as she passed on; but this critical examination, often so exceedingly distressing, caused not the slightest embarrassment to Constance. She was indeed most happily unconscious of it, being wholly occupied by a project for getting rid of Mrs. Hartley's arm, and getting possession of that of Penelope instead. She had totally forgotten that the ceremony of her presentation to the mistress of the house had not yet been gone through, and consequently was quite taken by surprise when Mrs. Hartley suddenly stopped before a lady of very remarkable appearance, who stood alone in the centre of a small circle of gentlemen to whom she was talking with exceeding animation.

Lady Dort was tall, and thin to a degree which may probably be considered as the extremest excess to which attenuation can go, consistently with the powers and operations of life. But very far from considering this lamentable leanness as a personal deformity, she assisted the anatomical exhibition of her unfleshed skeleton by every means in her power. Whatever those worldly-minded people might think, however, who feel a sort of shrinking terror at whatever recalls the image of death, no tolerably well-informed student in anatomy could have been found to deny that the formation and putting together of Lady Dort's bones was everything that could be wished for in a subject. It was, in fact, quite perfect; and having, most unfortunately, once heard this stated by a certain learned surgeon who attended her when she had broken her arm, she never forgot it, and from that time forth continued, as far as was in her power, to render the barbarous practice of Burking unnecessary at the west end of the town, by showing herself in very nearly every large assembly collected there, with as kind an attention to display as was in any way consistent with decency.

On the night of Miss Ridley's introduction to her she was splendidly habited in a robe of violet-coloured satin, which had every appearance of having been glued in little mathematically-cut portions to her person, so strangely free was its *corsage* from any *soupçon* of those puckerings which the fallibility of human workwomen is almost sure to leave. Her waist was immeasurably long, and might easily have been spanned by the claw of an ostrich, while her flat bust was as immeasurably wide, looking like an antique slab of yellow marble, placed edgeways, the well-articulated shoulders representing a sort of volute termination to it. On her head she wore a slight but expansive fabric of pink gauze, in form resembling the well-known *chapeau de paille*, over which floated in wavy mystery of outline a mingled multitude of feathers.

'Ah, Mrs. Hartley!' she exclaimed, breaking off her discourse, 'it is an eternity since I saw you! Delighted—much, much delighted!'

'Permit me, Lady Dort, to present my young friend Miss Ridley to you,' said Mrs. Hartley.

Constance was startled, partly by being so suddenly brought back from her rambling speculations, and partly by the singularity of the figure before her; the consequence of which was, that she blushed most beautifully, and, in fact, looked so strikingly lovely, that Lady Dort appeared to be as much taken by surprise as herself, and gazed earnestly at her for a moment without speaking.

'Upon my word, Mrs. Hartley,' she said at length, 'we are very much obliged to you. I beg to return thanks in the name of the whole town, properly so called. It is charming to be new—but it is new also to be so very charming. Miss Ridley, permit me to take your hand. Let us be friends. May I hope it? It has been the object of my life,' she added, dropping the delicate little hand she had taken in her bony claw in order to clasp the cracking member with its fellow, in one of her favourite attitudes of ecstasy; 'it has been the favourite object of my existence, Miss Ridley, to collect round me all that nature has let slip through her fingers upon us of divine. We do sometimes,' she continued, looking round upon the circle of gentlemen she had been addressing, 'we do sometimes meet with odds and ends of divinity, even in our valley of tears. Mr. Meer, bard of beauty, let me present you to Miss Ridley. You find me apt, great master of the lyre, do you not? The young and fair belong to your society by prescriptive right. Mr. Mortimer—Mr. Lodhard—Mr. Miller, Miss Ridley—names all known to fame, my fair new friend, and well worthy of a beam from a new-dropped star like you.'

Having finished this speech, Lady Dort turned to another group of new arrivals, and began another of equal energy and eloquence. But Mrs. Hartley had not done with her yet; and though conscious that she and her protégée, taken together, had already received more of her ladyship's precious words than fairly fell to the share of her party, she was absolutely obliged to

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commit the solecism of not passing on, when she was done with, in order to keep her promise of presenting Sir James. Had the young man, now close behind her, been possessed of a smaller estate, she would have felt greatly embarrassed; but strong in the remembrance of his acres, she patiently waited till the set succeeding her had moved off, and then slipping again to the front of her bony ladyship, she made a new attack upon her hospitality, by saying, 'Give me leave, Lady Dort, to present my daughters, and the brother of Miss Ridley—Sir James Ridley, Lady Dort.'

To any one who had wished to study the vagaries of manner on which Lady Dort piqued herself, the present opportunity would have been invaluable; for at a single stroke, she ran through the whole of her tones and semitones, and from the *in alt* note, with which she had welcomed Constance, fell at once into the lowest flat in her scale, while receiving her brother and the Misses Hartley. A person less at home in all little drawing-room subtleties than Mrs. Hartley, might have been *désentêtée* by Lady Dort's manner of raising her eyebrows and looking astonished; but to her it was a matter of very little consequence. All the good that could be got by an *entrée* for the season to Lady Dort's parties, was already secured by the card which lay in her china dish at home, and she wanted nothing more from her; neither was she in the slightest degree surprised by her altered manner, which she perfectly understood. The 'Morning Post,' announcing the arrival of a new face, with a good fortune, had caused the coveted bits of pasteboard to find their way to Bruton Street; but that was no reason, as Mrs. Hartley justly soliloquized, why *her* manœuvrings should not go on as well as her ladyship's; and the leading Sir James Ridley about being now her first object, she would hardly have shrunk from it, had she been assured that Lady Dort would have raised her fist as well as her eyebrows.

She was wrong, however, in fancying that Sir James Ridley's handsome equipage, or good estate, would produce any favourable effect on her sublime ladyship; and the supposition showed that the existence of tact does not ensure the perfection of it. Had that of Mrs. Hartley been of more universal application, she would have known that not even the intrinsic value of an article can give it estimation in the eyes of a collector, if it be not in his own line, unless, indeed, it might be in his power to exchange it. And as Lady Dort could by no device change away the vacant-looking Sir James Ridley for an Apollo, an Apelles, a Venus, or a Minerva, she received him much as she might have done a bale of goods misdirected to her. As to the Misses Hartley, they were there as a matter of course; and as pretty-looking, well-dressed young ladies must ever be a necessary part in the *matériel* of all sorts and conditions of drawing-rooms, they each received a salutation performed by the projection of the chin in the first instance, and the withdrawing it in the second. Having returned which, they all passed on, perfectly satisfied with their portion of the honours of the evening emanating from her ladyship.

The individual of the party, however, the most benefited by this second ceremony of introduction, was Constance. The change which she had been so earnestly meditating, but so little knew how to effect, was now brought about without difficulty. In her eagerness to perform her promise to Sir James, Mrs. Hartley dropt the arm of his sister; and Constance, retaining quite sufficient presence of mind to take advantage of it, had twisted round, and linked herself to her friend Penelope, without hazarding the success of the manœuvre by delay. As the party moved on, Mrs. Hartley turned to look for her, and well satisfied by the change, took the offered arm of Sir James, and proceeded to explore the treasures, living and dead, of the second drawing-room.

It was now that the pleasures of the evening began for Constance; Miss Hartley, who would not have been there but for the purpose of acting the part of chorus to her friend, willingly devoted herself to the office, and pressing the arm which had taken hers with a movement that denoted a sort of congratulatory welcome, she said, 'Now ask me all the questions you can think of, Constance. As far as my knowledge of men and manners extends, you shall have the benefit of it.'

'And that is precisely what I am longing for,' replied Constance. 'Which plan will give us the best chance, Penelope?—walking or sitting?'

'For seeing, with safe opportunity to talk of what we see, I should recommend sitting—but for being seen, walking must decidedly be preferred.'

'Then let us get seats, dearest Penelope, without a moment's delay. We will make ourselves shows anywhere else that you please; but here——Let us sit down directly, shall we?'

'If we can win our way to those very comfortable-looking chairs near that door, and have the luck to find them still vacant when we get there, we shall be admirably placed—for, however inconvenient "cumbrous love-making in doorways" may be, you may depend upon it, that for such a pair of spies as you and I, no situation can be so profitable as the vicinity to such a point of collision.'

The attempt was accordingly made, but did not prove successful; for before they arrived at the spot, the chairs were taken by two other ladies, who had dropt into them at the very moment they had seemed to have been espied.

'Never mind,' said Penelope, preparing to stand, as nearly as might be, to where she had wished to sit; 'we will remain here, nevertheless; and it is likely enough we may succeed in a few minutes, for it is very rare to see any one contented with the same place for five minutes together.'

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'Excepting that very fat, and that very thin gentleman, who have got possession of the ottoman in the corner,' replied Constance. 'I remarked them the moment I got into the room—and they have been sitting there ever since. How immoderately they laugh! I quite envy them. I declare it is hardly fair to keep such a series of very good jokes to themselves. I wish we were near enough to hear them.'

'And if you were, Constance, they would no longer be to be heard—not to mention the obvious danger of your wishing yourself away again, if they were,' returned her better-informed friend.

'Do you know them, Penelope? Are they celebrities?' demanded Constance.

'Most decidedly,' replied Miss Hartley; 'and considering how little attraction very fat old men, or very thin old men, generally possess for beautiful young ladies of twenty-one, it really seems as if the air of the place had inspired you with discernment, to make you pay them the attention which you seem to have done.'

'Who are they, Penelope?' eagerly demanded Constance, her eyes still fixed upon the laughing pair.

'Suppose that in order to answer you without danger—for, notwithstanding the vaunted retirement of a crowd, there may be idle ears at liberty to listen even to such chit-chat as ours—suppose, Constance, that I assume the style of a grave Theocritus, and name the merry pair by some safe classical sobriquet, which may be interpreted hereafter for your private advantage. Clericus, our fat friend, is probably, I should think, the wittiest individual extant. He seems to live in an atmosphere of sparks. Nothing approaches him of a nature, however iron or flinty, that does not instantly produce scintillation; and even if the collision be wanting, spontaneous combustion takes place, and he blazes away, right and left, horrifying some, enchanting others, but electrifying all. Some of the best of his many excellent sermons are positively little else than rich collections of *bon-mots*, and some of the most powerful essays in the language will at the first reading in some degree lose their argumentative effect, by reason of the incredible profusion of comic metaphor in which they are clothed, and which leads to laughter so genuine, that the reasoning faculties are all put to rout, and have no power to sit in judgment till the paroxysm is over.'

'I can partly guess his *un*classical name from your portrait,' said Constance, laughing; 'for, thank heaven, even at Appleby Hut one can read. But is your Clericus as great in the drawing-room as in the closet? Does his conversation sparkle as brightly as his ink?'

'I am told so, but I have never had the honour of conversing with him. He is not what is impertinently called a ladies' man—that is to say, he does not wander about from group to group in a drawing-room, dropping clever words for ladies to pick up, in order to embalm them in their scented tablets. I have often remarked him just as you see him now, indulging himself, perhaps, as much as his friend, by pouring out all the grotesque ideas which this motley assembly suggests to him. And that attribute of perfect ease: the quiet, lambent, unfatiguing fun that plays about his features; the half-closed eye, and the delightful inward chuckle, that really seems tickling his heart, without getting so far as his sleeve, all show that it is not for display but for enjoyment, that he lets loose his spirits in search of the ridiculous. However, I am not quite, *quite* sure that all the jokes which that strangely matched pair concoct, when they thus set their noses so very closely together, are of a nature to be universally understood, or generally relished, by our sex. Wit, they say, is not always dainty as to what it feeds on, and where fostered and licensed into overwhelming strength, rarely, I believe, finds anything too common or unclean for its digestion. For which reason it is, I suspect, that the wittiest authors are, for the most part, far from being the greatest favourites with us. I never heard any woman say, even *en petit comité*, that she admired Swift or greatly enjoyed Tom Jones. However, we owe the merry pair before us our thanks, for having printed only what all may read; and no right whatever is left us to sit in judgment on jests, often witty enough, as I have heard, to insure an immortality of laughter, and yet sagely permitted to die in an hour.'

'Who then is the other?' said Constance.'

'You speak of both as authors.'

'His classical name,' replied Penelope, glancing at the many persons whose ears were within reach, if their attention was not; 'his classical name shall be Contrarius—for he is made up of faculties and qualities seemingly at war with each other, but which in him are found so intimately blended together, that after you have described him one way, you are obliged to begin again, and paint him pretty nearly the reverse, in order to correct the false impression you have given. And yet, were you to set out *vice versâ*, the same contradictory operation would be necessary to correct the statement.'

'But how do you mean, Penelope? Is he both bad and good?' said Constance.

'O! that were nothing, my dear child; for may it not be said of most of us? But that diminutive form appears to be the earthly habitation of two perfectly distinct spirits. Contrarius is wise and weak, generous and little-minded; his very soul appears graceful and refined—his imaginings beautiful, his aspirations pure. Yet will he condescend to be pitiful and spiteful, and for the sake of giving utterance to a pointed word, or stinging jest, render himself more notorious for his ill words than his good deeds. That his eye is keener than that of most other men is likely enough; and also that, despite the gracious sweetness of his voice, that Voltaire-like lip may be trusted as a true index of the love of jibing ridicule within. But

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how well, while he is watching, as we see him now, the 'fantastic tricks' displayed before him, does he illustrate those words, pregnant of mystic meaning, which speak of things which

"Make the angels weep; who, with our spleens,
Would all themselves laugh mortals."

Yet it is hardly fair, perhaps, to quarrel with the poor gentleman for not being altogether of an angelic nature; I see not any particular right we have to expect it.'

'And that little lady, Penelope, who is seated in so extraordinary an attitude upon the ottoman?' demanded the curious Constance, turning her eyes upon the diminutive figure of a female, who seemed determined, in defiance of nature, to make her person conspicuous; and truly, as she had managed it, a giantess might have passed by unheeded, while all eyes were turned on her.

'That is Lady Bateman,' replied Miss Hartley; 'she is really an exceedingly clever woman, and has a sprightliness of fancy, and often a happy originality of expression, that render her conversation piquant and attractive in no common degree. On every subject that is started, it is so very impossible to guess what she may happen to say, that I have seen listeners hang about her, as virtuosi do over a newly opened tumulus, more from the exciting uncertainty of what they may see thrown out, than from any preconceived notion of its high value. Yet she is clever, really clever, bright-witted, and keenly observant. But with considerable acuteness in sifting out and laying down the tangible data of a proposition, she has so remarkable a bias for arriving at a wrong conclusion, that not one in a hundred of the opinions she has formed is sound; and the consequence is, that she often writes and discourses most eloquent nonsense, while her brilliant words and animated manner indicate at the same time a great activity of intellectual movement.'

'And that perfect contrast to her?' said Miss Ridley, removing her eyes from the restless mobility of Lady Bateman to the serene tranquillity of a somewhat older lady, seated on a sofa at a considerable distance from her. 'There is something so unobtrusively quiet in her dress, aspect, and demeanour, that had I not observed the personages pointed out as Mr. Miller and Mr. Lodhart listening to her with very marked attention, and with an air which seemed to say that nothing she uttered must be lost, I should hardly have fixed upon her as one of the subjects for your explanatory eloquence.'

'You are in high luck, Constance,' replied Miss Hartley, 'in having the gratification of meeting that lady here—for it is but rarely that she gratifies a gathering of this kind by appearing at it. She comes forth from the quiet retreat she has chosen just often enough to prevent the world from asserting that she has renounced the companionship of her fellow mortals, and seldom enough to prevent her being harassed by their clamorous applause, or diluted into frivolity by the mixture. That quiet little lady, Constance, is decidedly the most remarkable woman extant. Nay, I am not sure that the hackneyed phrase may be mended, and that I may stoutly venture, without fear of contradiction, to say that she is the most extraordinary woman that has ever made herself known to fame. That is Mrs. Jane Beauchamp.'

'I suspected as much,' returned Constance, her cheek glowing, and her bright young eye resting, eloquent of reverence, on the delicate pale face and tranquil aspect of the poetess. 'Were I to retire to Appleby to-morrow, Penelope, I should not feel that my London expedition had disappointed me. Do all that look upon her feel as I do? O! what a power to bear about with one! Is she conscious of it, think you?

'If she were to ask herself the question, whether or no she was conscious that all eyes are turned upon her with curiosity, interest, and admiration, I take it for granted that herself would be obliged to answer "yes." But I doubt if the question was ever asked; or if it was, the answer, as you may perceive, has, at any rate, produced no perceptible effect on her manner,' returned Penelope.

'How extraordinary,' resumed Constance, 'how almost supernatural it is, that a person formed, as it should seem, as a pattern of gentle meekness, and of almost shy reserve, should be made the depository of a spirit that can soar like an eagle into the realms of light and love—send forth occasionally a trumpet-note of such high manly feeling, that a craven might turn hero as he listened—and dive into the very depths of the most fearful passions, detail their signs, their symptoms, and their results, as if she had lived in hand-in-hand intimacy with them all: and then come forth from the laboratory where all those marvellous deeds have been done, looking as if she had been engaged in knitting a stocking, or hemming a pocket-handkerchief!'

'Ah! there's the mystery,' returned her friend. 'I once heard one of those very happy ladies, whose vocation it is to give dinners to poets and philosophers, and who usually designate themselves, either playfully or proudly, as the case may be, "we literary people;"—I once heard one of these say, that the having made the acquaintance of Mrs. Jane Beauchamp had entirely destroyed the delightful illusion which she had till then experienced in reading impassioned verses. "I always used to fancy," she said, "that the poet was opening her heart to me, and that I was enjoying the delightful privilege of being confidant to one of the master-spirits of the universe. But Mrs. Jane Beauchamp has destroyed this delightful idea for ever!" Of course a speech which challenged so many clever things in return was not addressed to me—but it set me thinking; and I am convinced that the literary lady was wrong. Not, indeed, in deciding that Mrs. Jane Beauchamp's impassioned poetry was not the transcript of her personal feelings, but in having supposed that such could

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ever be the process of poetical composition. I truly believe that an anatomical lecturer might as reasonably be expected to feel the conscious throbbing of every nerve he describes, as a poet to be under the influence of the passions he paints. In neither case could the description be expected to be very accurate. It is vain to plead that in dramatic poetry, the author, to be eloquent, must identify himself with the speaker. He must, correctly speaking, do no such thing. I do not mean to talk profanely, but it appears more like the truth to say that the poet's mind should rather be in a state calmly to commune with the Eternal Cause, than to be struggling in the agonies of effects produced by the abuse of his perverted laws. *The great moralist* never made a *worse* blunder than when he scoffingly told Garrick that he could not sympathize with Punch. Garrick should have answered, "Perhaps not." But have you observed, Constance, the gentleman who has now seated himself in the chair next Mrs. Beauchamp?'

'It is Mr. Lodhart, is it not?' said Miss Ridley.

'Yes, my dear, that is Mr. Lodhart. And were his name not excluded, of necessity, from being inserted on that great beacon-roll of the land, whereby the multitude learn what has been discovered from the critical look-out most worthy of honour and renown, it may be doubted if he would not be now classed and proclaimed as the first of living prose writers, with the exception of the one great star now sinking in the north, to rise again in all sorts of immortality. But there is something remarkable, and altogether unique, in Mr. Lodhart's position. He is like a bright lamp, so placed as to light up and bring forth to view all the pictured objects that it shines upon, yet carefully sheltered from the spectator's eye, its enormous power felt but not seen.'

'I wish he would write another story,' said Constance. 'I never knew what a luxury there might be in excessive weeping till I read his little volume of sighs and sorrow—of human frailty and redeeming penitence. Never shall I forget the intense enjoyment of being shut up in the summer-house in the glen, with that book, crying my eyes out, and morally certain that no human being could come near me to say, "What is the matter?" But, my dearest Penelope, despite the sublime state of my mind, which I declare to you *is* something more than common, I begin to long exceedingly for a chair to sit upon. Do you not think there might be hopes of such a luxury, if we could penetrate into the back settlements yonder against the wall?'

Miss Hartley shook her head despondingly. 'It is a desperate enterprise, dear friend,' said she; 'and poor disconsolate damsels, as we are, without a cavalier in the wide world, as far as I can see, to help us, I almost think we had better remain where we are—unless, indeed, you would like better to walk on into the other room?'

'No, no,' replied Constance, laughing; 'I might change my place a little for a seat, but I certainly will not leave this honoured room for the sake of walking into another. Perhaps the cruel ladies, who came between us and our destined repose, may abdicate ere long—and we will wait for this with what patience we can.'

Whether any part of this conversation was overheard, or whether only the weary looks of Constance attracted his attention, may be uncertain, but at this moment Mr. Mortimer, one of the gentlemen who had been presented by name to Miss Ridley by Lady Dort, and who had been hovering at no great distance from her ever since, made his way to her side, and said,

'If you will do me the honour of taking my arm, Miss Ridley, I think that I can lead you and your friend Miss Hartley to two seats just abandoned behind that door.'

Constance gave one quick glance to the face of her friend, but it sufficed to show her that the proposal of her new acquaintance was approved; and, gently thanking him, she took his arm, and had presently the consolation of finding herself and Penelope safely seated, with a very tolerable side view of a group, consisting of one nobleman, two beauties, and a celebrity; and, what was far better still, with an extremely handsome young individual of the latter species, stationed at her elbow, and apparently determined to be agreeable.

Constance was fully sensible of the flattering compliment thus offered to her, and felt both delighted and grateful; for had not Lady Dort declared that the name of Mr. Mortimer was known to fame? But she would have felt, or ought to have felt, more grateful still, had she been aware that the young man beside her, who really seemed enchanted by every word she uttered, and most evidently disposed to sacrifice the conversation of the illustrious *confrérie* to which he belonged, solely for the happiness of being near her, was quite as much celebrated for the boasted fastidiousness of his taste, as for his unacted tragedy, or even his successful volume of poems.

Henry Mortimer was in fact the *enfant-gaté* of May Fair. Without this dangerous pre-eminence, he would probably have continued to be a very estimable, as he certainly was a very talented man. But beginning by most unmercifully quizzing fine-lady patronage, he ended by becoming completely intoxicated by it. As unconscious, however, of this fact, as a baby is of original sin, he continued with unmitigated severity to pour forth whole quivers of ridicule upon the fair patronesses of poetry and poets; and while those who knew him well were quite aware that he would probably have pined to death had their smiles been withdrawn from him for a single day, he had taught every *literata* of fashion to believe that, excepting in her own case, there was nothing on earth he so utterly despised, execrated, and detested, as the being *fêté* for his literary reputation.

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But of all this Penelope knew but little, and Constance nothing; the former, however, was well acquainted with his graceful and imaginative compositions, and knew also that he was one of those favoured sons of Apollo whose doom it was *not* to wait for their meed of fame from posterity. This was of course sufficient to set her quite at her ease respecting the propriety of permitting his attendance on them; and accordingly the trio chatted away in the most lively and agreeable manner possible, and very much as if they had been acquainted for the last ten years.

Constance, at this moment, had not much leisure for meditation; nevertheless she did find time to tell herself, that let people say what they would about disappointments being inevitable, where expectation has been great—all she had ever hoped for, or dreamed of, was a thousand times surpassed by the intense gratification she was then enjoying. Many there be, with imaginations as excitable, and intelligence as bright, and as fully awakened as her own, who would have been incapable of tasting an equal degree of pleasure when newly introduced to it. Had Constance been shy, she would have rather suffered from than enjoyed Mr. Mortimer's conversation; for there was a mixture of *persiflage* in it, which to persons afflicted with that malady is always alarming. There are two sorts of shyness; the one arising from the faculties not having been accustomed to habits of prompt activity, and unused to the drilling which ensures obedience to command; the other from a too intense anxiety about self, and a nervous persuasion that everything done and said is matter of observation to all around. Constance was equally exempt from both. From the first she had been saved by the early consciousness of her position at home; her grandmother, though kind-hearted, generous, and affectionate, being so whimsical and eccentric in her intercourse with the neighbourhood, that had it not been for the good sense and ready tact of Constance, she would probably have quarrelled with most of them; from the last she was secured by a spirit too conscious of power to enjoy the display of talent in others, to have leisure left for any very anxious meditation upon her own. Our young novice, therefore, not only listened without embarrassment or alarm of any kind, but assisted in no slight degree the show-off brilliancy of the young man, by the quickness with which she caught the *spark*, whether obvious, or veiled from ordinary eyes, which might generally be found in every speech he made. Mortimer felt this, and kindled into even more than usual animation; and certainly, however far such colloquy may be from that which sages hold, when deeply reasoning on all things in heaven and in earth, the sallies generated by the meeting of lively spirits, where there is sufficient of general information on both, or on all sides, to prevent either party from being afraid of flying off in all imaginable directions, for allusions and illustrations—without danger that matter-of-fact dullness shall put its extinguisher on the glancing meteors of their idle wit— such sallies are not among the most worthless playthings of mortality.

The worst feature in this species of display is, that it very rarely exists without drawing some of its matériel from ridicule. This is an agent of enormous power, and when brought forward in a good cause, may be as useful as a hurricane in clearing a pestilential atmosphere; but it is bad taste to use it incessantly on all occasions, great or small. In truth, it is in many hands an instrument as wearisome as the jew's-harp; and often bears no nearer resemblance to genuine satire, than do the ringing notes of the pestilent bit of steel so called, to those of the violoncello.

Mr. Henry Mortimer knew all this as well as King Solomon himself could have done, and profited by his knowledge; but not perhaps in the very best way. He would almost as soon have submitted to stand in the pillory, as have condescended to amuse young ladies and young gentlemen, by quizzing everything which diverged on one side or the other, from the narrow, neatly-fenced, little garden-path of ordinary *bon ton* existence. But he had within him no inconsiderable portion of the quicksilver faculty called wit, which is too easily set in motion, and too difficult to keep still, for any wisdom in the world to restrain it in perfect order; and as he never sat down, like Voltaire, to indulge the gambols of his wanton imp upon paper, (for all his writings were of the most tender and plaintive kind,) he felt himself obliged to have recourse to speech in order to relieve the pungent pricking of its vivacious restlessness; but it really was pretty nearly the first study of his life to avoid the reputation of being satirical. This arose, not so much from any particular delicacy of moral feeling, as from a deep averseness to be one of the rabble route whose ceaseless snappings at their fellow-creatures he so heartily despised. His ordinary mode, therefore, of speaking of the individuals with whom he was surrounded, appeared to be excessively kind, and he fondly flattered himself that his general reputation was that of being one of the most good-natured men alive; but those who knew him, would very greatly have preferred that he should not speak of them at all, than that he should take it into his head to praise them.

A very little light thrown into a dark chamber will make everything within it visible. About one-tenth part of what has now been said of Mr. Mortimer, would have sufficed to make Constance Ridley understand him much better than she did; but being without it, she mistook him considerably; and ere their first conversation ended, not only thought him beyond all comparison the handsomest, the most agreeable, and the most intellectual man she had ever seen, but also the most candid and the most liberal.

And what did Mr. Mortimer think of her?

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why, in the first place, he thought that she was by many degrees nearer in form and feature to his abstract idea of what a woman ought to be, than any other he had yet seen. But lest the reader may from this estimate the beauty of Miss Ridley too highly, it must be observed that Henry Mortimer had for the last six or seven years pronounced precisely the same judgment upon every woman who had happened to please him. Though of moderate fortune, and by no means of distinguished race, Mr. Mortimer had a profound conviction at the bottom of his heart, that he literally, *bonâ fide*, and in sober earnest, was 'not as other men are,' in respect to his claim upon society, or even upon Nature herself. He had a deep, immovable conviction that no man had ever been formed with an equal susceptibility to beauty, an equal refinement of taste, (whether in music, painting, ragouts, or literature,) or an equal right to appropriate to himself, in all ways, whatever was fairest, richest, choicest, best. For very nearly every human being who approached him, or whom he approached, he had a feeling of contempt so profound, that it amounted almost to the gentleness of pity; and it is probable that the reason why his very sweet verses were so constantly in a strain of sadness, despite the unbroken prosperity of his own existence, was, that all things and all people in the world, excepting himself and his own belongings, were about equally objects of pity and contempt. Yet with all this there was much that was excellent in his character; he was honourable in all his dealings, and in all his feelings; actively compassionate towards the physical wants of his fellow-creatures, and never willingly uttered an untruth; though this last excellent and most rare quality was unable to save him from perpetually making misstatements, all of which had their origin in the distorted views which his imagination presented to him, and which he cherished and hoarded as the result of profound and unprejudiced observation.

It is one of the privileges of the biographical muse, (sometimes perhaps, a little abused,) that they may look into the hearts of their heroes and heroines, and proclaim aloud all they see there. It is in this manner alone that the above sketch of Henry Mortimer has been obtained, for no fellow-mortal had, during the earlier period of his life, any conception of the species of egotism which in some directions decidedly amounted to monomania. Except indeed, that all believed him to be a liberal-minded and honourable gentleman, and knew him to be a man of talent—that his male friends accused him of no vice, and his female ones proclaimed him a model of beauty, (all of which was essentially true:) few men were ever less thoroughly known by their associates than Henry Mortimer. To point out every particular wherein this was the case, would be tedious—but one or two examples may be given, in order to make the general description understood. He was universally considered to be a man of very violent passions, and applauded for the restraint which his principles opposed to them—for in all respects his life was perfectly well regulated. He was conceived to be a very strong political partisan of Tory principles; and much credit was given to his liberality, on account of the social toleration which he accorded to persons of a different way of thinking. He was considered, also, to be inclined, both by habit and inclination, to extravagant expenditure, and an almost lavish degree of refinement in all personal luxury. But the 'thinking public' were totally mistaken in all these particulars.

In the first place, Henry Mortimer was not a man of violent passions: for he had never yet felt any emotion which might not have been checked, and conquered, by the glancing of one single thought across its fervour, suggesting that the indulging it might be ultimately injurious to himself. For politics, or for parties, he cared not a rush. Conservatism appeared to him to be a more gentleman-like creed than the reverse, and he therefore preferred it. But he would have blushed at his own want of common sense, could he have permitted any feelings, or opinions, having their source so distant from his individual self, to have interfered with the enjoyment of his daily associations.

That he should ever have involved himself in any inconvenience from extravagance, was morally impossible; for the doing so would have involved a contradiction in the very nature of things. Pecuniary embarrassment is a positive evil; and the sun would be as likely to produce darkness, as Henry Mortimer to bring, by his own act and deed, any such consequence upon himself.

But the thinking public have often been deceived in their estimate of character upon worse grounds. Whatever Mortimer spoke of, was warmed, by a sort of internal hot-house temperature, into enthusiasm. There was no falsehood in this, and but little affectation; and even that little arose less from his love of display—which required no forced efforts for its gratification—than from one habitually poetical propensity to hyperbole. Yet even this was under the direction of his exquisite taste, and often gave very graceful strength to his language, never rising to bombast, nor sinking to bathos.

From the age of fifteen, it had been the unceasing habit of his life to fall in love; but so admirably had he managed, that although he had made seven offers, and been six times accepted, not to mention some hundred or two of foolish fond expectations excited besides, he had never yet been caught out in acting dishonourably to anybody, nor did he, in his heart of hearts, believe he ever had done so. There was always some high moral reason for the change in his sentiments; and the sufferings he had endured from his various disappointments in this way, was rather a favourite theme with him in his conversation with agreeable young married women. It sufficed to awaken a gentle pity for

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him, without trenching in the slightest degree upon propriety; and permitted him with perfect safety to let the lambent flame of poetical tenderness flicker and gleam athwart his discourse, without bringing him more within reach of Doctors' Commons than if he had been talking for so many hours on the Corn Laws.

At the time Miss Ridley met him, he had just got to the end of one of those heart-breaking affairs; and every feeling heart was yearning towards him with sympathy and compassion, on account of his having been beguiled into engaging himself to a woman who had actually been guilty of the incredible indelicacy of ordering her father's carriage (in which she was only accompanied by three of her sisters) to stop, when she met him on horseback in Hyde Park! Nothing, it was said, was ever more lovingly beautiful than the letters in which he pointed out to her how fatally the rude touch of indelicacy wounds the gossamer plumage of the classic emblem of the soul, the butterfly. Logic and poetry seemed to come forward, hand in hand, to confound her; but the unreasonable beauty took it so much amiss, that a quarrel ensued, which ended in a total rupture. But for this—unless something else had happened to prevent it—Henry Mortimer would have been a married man before Constance arrived in London; as it was, however, he was at perfect liberty to fall in love with her, which he did, before he had conversed with her for ten minutes.

Penelope watched them both with her quickly observing eye, and perceived at once that the fascinating Henry Mortimer was again enslaved; and that Constance was touched, as by an enchanter's wand, and already felt herself on the confines of a new world.

How subtile is the manner in which love—let it be of what quality it may—insinuates itself, when first it comes *en tiers* between two unsuspecting hearts! Nothing could be more light and airy than the tone of conversation carried on by Mr. Mortimer, Constance, and Penelope, for Miss Hartley bore, at the very least, an equal part in it; but by degrees the young man contrived to refer to the future, for answers to many pithy questions which either one or the other asked of him, so that it very speedily became evident that the acquaintance so accidentally begun must of necessity be carried on. Miss Hartley was quite aware that no man in London was better qualified than Henry Mortimer to supply all her own deficiencies in the task of explaining to Constance who was who, both in the fashionable and the literary world, and lost not the opportunity now afforded of asking various interesting questions on the subject. His manner of answering was all his own. In the first place, it was both accurate and explicit; in the next, it was poignant, lively and anecdotal; and lastly, it was liberal and kind.

It was almost impossible that any enjoyment should be greater than that of Constance, while this conversation lasted. If she were already in love, of course she did not know it, and therefore no shadow of embarrassment clouded the happy animation of her spirits. One after another she pointed out the persons rendered most conspicuous by the homage paid to them, till she had heard named, and gazed at accordingly, many of the most celebrated persons at that time in London.

'O what a store of portraits, with labels to them, shall I carry home with me to-night!' she exclaimed. 'But I have not finished my questionings yet, Mr. Mortimer. Who are those highly-dressed ladies, who look like sisters, and whom I have observed, ever since I have been here, moving about arm-in-arm, for ever in the wake of some great celebrity, and contriving from time to time to get a nod or a word graciously thrown to them?'

'Upon the which they live,' replied Mortimer. 'You have asked a very pregnant question, Miss Ridley, and one which I would rather answer by describing the class to which they belong, than by sketching portraits of themselves.'

'A class!' replied Constance. 'In what way do they particularly belong to a class!'

'Had I time, I think I could explain myself—but now I will only name without describing it; we will call them, if you please, specimens of the Blue Belles of England; and perhaps, at some future opportunity—but alas! here comes Mrs. Hartley, with so decided an air of walking towards her carriage, that it is impossible to mistake it—I must not lose another moment, but fly in search of Lady Dort, that she may present me.'

The young man slid away through the crowd as he spoke, and the two girls left their seats and joined the rest of their party, of which Sir James still made one.

'What the devil have you been about, Constance?' said her brother. 'I have looked round for you half-a-dozen times, but you were nowhere to be seen.'

'Ah! Sir James,' said Mrs. Hartley, 'you should not have looked for her in vain, had I not perceived that Lady Dort was so particularly inclined to distinguish her, that I thought it would be positively spoiling this brilliant *début*, were I to interfere. Have you enjoyed yourself, my dear love?'

'Excessively,' replied Constance with energy.

'And whom have you been presented to, dearest? and who has been presented to you!'

Before this question could be answered, Mr. Mortimer, his handsome face glowing with eagerness, and hastening, to the utmost of his power, the mincing steps of Lady Dort, who hung languishingly on his arm, drew near them, when her compliant ladyship performed the ceremony requested of her, by presenting him both to Mrs. Hartley and Sir James Ridley.

This done, she addressed herself to the whole party, declaring that their presence had given her more pleasure than she had

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power to express; and then, particularly addressing Constance, she expressed a fervent hope that she should see an immense deal of her.

She then glided away to bless others with the same charming affability, and Mrs. Hartley and her young ladies, assiduously attended by Sir James Ridley and Mr. Mortimer, made their way to the carriages which waited for them, and drove off.

STANZAS.

On reading of the soldier (Thomas Ramsay, of the Royal Marines) who died in the Military Hospital, from the dreadful effects of severe flogging.

BY MRS. CRAWFORD.

And this is England! This the boasted spot
That lifts its head above the nations all;
The freeman's home—where petty tyrants blot
Our page of glory, by the soldier's fall.
Yes! our bold chivalry, whose blood hath dyed
The battle-plain, to garland England's brow!
Whose daring prowess, in the combat tried,
Was never seen before the foe to bow;
Must quail and crouch beneath a despot's nod;
And bear the lash of torture to the bone,
Like eastern slave, as if there were no God!
But man's vile passions ruled the world alone.
Oh! less than men, that wear the human form;
Blood-thirsty chieftains of that gallant band,
Compelled to witness (with life's feelings warm)
The execution of the fell command;
To see their brave companion, in the bloom
And strength of manhood, bow beneath the stroke
That sent him reeking to a timeless tomb,
In heart, in spirit, as in body, broke;
Go, human revellers in human gore,
Quaff the full goblet, and enjoy the jest,
The song, the dance, and hug the golden store
Of life's enjoyments to each heartless breast.
Let not the vision of the murdered dead,
The broken hearts that he hath left behind,
Disturb your joys; still bear the lofty head,
And play the pretty Neros of mankind
Amongst your slaves; for what are they but slaves,
Who have the privilege of man resigned;
Thus to be sent dishonoured to their graves.
O England! O my country! boast not thou
Thy mighty deeds for slaves beyond the sea,
Till thou hast wiped away the blood, that now,
Like 'angels trumpet-tongued,' accuseth thee.
What would the language of a Tell have been—
The freeman's model!—he, the glorious Swiss!
Whose arrows did a nation's freedom win?
Rouse! brothers, rouse! and burst a chain like this!
Start like high racers for the mighty goal;
Wake every thrilling nerve in freedom's cause;
Call on the noble—on the just in soul,
To expunge our Draco code! and frame new laws—
Laws that all freemen in a Christian land
May ask, and, if not granted, may command!

MEMOIRS OF AN ITALIAN EXILE.*

CHAPTER VIII.

Be this true or not, their mutual situation in Parma could not fail to bring them soon into the closest intimacy. In affairs of state and parties of pleasure, riding, hunting, and travelling, they were constant companions. The general had orders never to depart from his mistress's side; she had orders never to move a step without him.

Neipperg was a tall, fine-looking personage. His age at his arrival was not much beyond thirty. He had a bright warlike countenance, and, when seen on his left

* Continued from vol. x. p. 364.

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side, he was a striking type of manly beauty. In his early campaigns, in a close engagement, the lance of a French hussar had deprived him of his right eye. That honourable wound was carefully covered with a black band, and there remained charm enough in the eye he had left to win a weak woman's heart. It was but too soon; and, alas! before the 5th of May, 1821, the great funereal day at St. Helena, that Maria Louisa began to prefer her groves of Sala, and her parks of Colorno, to the watchful curiosity of the city. It was too soon that her pale brow sank from its habitual expression of Austrian pride—that she was confined to her apartments for long intervals—that, in short, the 'King of Rome' ceased to be without a rival in her maternal tenderness.

The report of her weakness spread. In Milan and Turin, the Italians, always bold and independent in the theatre, received her with loud cheers—'Long live the Countess of Neipperg!' But a Countess of Neipperg was in the mean while living in Austria, secluded in the solitude of her husband's castle, and, by the arrangement of the congress of Vienna, Maria Louisa, in case of marriage, was to be bereft of her states. At length, however, the lovers having found themselves both in a state of widowhood, and the cabinet of Austria having yielded its consent, with great secrecy and haste, in a small chapel at Naples, they received the nuptial benediction, and this

'Connubium vocat, hoc prætexit nomine culpam.'

The epoch of her long connection with General Neipperg was one of the happiest for her subjects. Neipperg was a man of generous and liberal sentiments. Endowed with a mild, though rather an obstinate temper, he abhorred violent measures; and, whenever he did not labour under unfavourable prepossessions, he always stood forth firmly for the cause of justice and truth. He was very popular. He spoke not only Italian, but even the vulgar dialects of the people; his style of living was simple; his manners affable and easy. In public calamities he was active and zealous in the cause of humanity. In public seditions he appeared alone and unarmed, allaying popular fury by the calmness of his countenance.

The days of Neipperg's administration were over too soon. In 1827, his regiment, his family, his courtiers, and the whole population, attended his funeral; his helmet and sword were laid by his side—his war-horse was slain on his tomb. Maria Louisa departed for Vienna.

The public voice pronounced that Count Neipperg did not carry all her affections to his grave; that he was not, even during his lifetime, the sole, nor the first master of her thoughts. Captain Crotti, one of her handsomest grenadiers, was, by the jealous private secretary, prohibited from mounting guard at the palace, because it was said his fond sovereign stood for hours at her window looking at him with covetous eyes. We have already expressed our opinion as to the ground on which such accusations stood. The melancholy fact is, that there was in her conduct more than could be required to authorize all kind of idle conjectures. Her good people were highly scandalized. 'Daughter of the North,' they were ready to say, 'is it thus that you give lessons of continence to the glowing bosoms of the children of Italy? Is it to set such an example that Heaven bestowed upon you a sceptre, a long line of illustrious ancestors, the glory of a beautiful name? Is it for such an occupant that we kneel before the throne, and bring the fruit of our toil to its feet; that we offer our prayers to heaven for its security?'

Such discontents were not always expressed in whispers. The people of Parma have, in the worst of times, been famous for boldness of speech. Maria Louisa could hear their murmurs, and read their lampoons. Unequivocal marks of disrespect met her everywhere. She was indignant at it. She changed her manners towards her subjects; her subjects changed their feelings towards her; and, when the general vicissitudes of the Peninsula in 1831 arrayed all the population in war against their governments, Maria Louisa had already become an object of contemptuous dislike.

Since the epoch of the fall of Napoleon, the public mind had been unsettled in Italy. The disappointment of the hopes excited by the French invasions had spread over the country an aspect of gloom. The holy alliance had prevailed over Napoleon only by appealing to the deepest feelings of the nation. The English and Austrians marched over Italy in 1814, preceded by the most sacred promises of emancipation and freedom. Secret societies, bound by terrible vows and bloody rites, acting under the veil of awful mystery, were, under the general name of *Carbonari*, multiplied with wonderful activity to second the efforts of the allies, and rid Italy at once of the French. All along the ridge of the Apennines the bold peasantry of the mountains were armed against the remains of their armies. When the invaders had been driven out, and the ancient governments reinstalled, the Italians soon recovered from their illusion: they found the Austrians worse enemies than the French. The new governments proved more insupportable than the military despotism of Napoleon.

The Carbonari rallied, and, with a talent for conspiracy peculiar to the countrymen of Macchiavello, deeply undermined the throne of their princes. Spain, equally deceived, equally betrayed, had already shaken off those fetters which she had incautiously cemented with her best blood, and forced Ferdinand VII. to sanction by oath her free institutions. The astonishing success of liberty in Spain encouraged the efforts of Italy. Naples in 1820, and Piedmont in 1821, rose in open rebellion. The king of

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the Two Sicilies and the king of Sardinia were both compelled to receive laws from their subjects. Those two revolutions, however, took place at different periods, and without concert. They were rather the result of sectarian schemes than the outbursting of national resentment. The army, the nobility, and the higher classes, were in general alone implicated in them. The people understood nothing of their object or meaning. The successful patriots seemed to have no national aim. We heard of a Neapolitan parliament and of a Piedmontese constitution—of Italy not a word was said. Every allusion to national independence and union was carefully avoided. It was evident that those two provinces meant to constitute and organize themselves without provoking foreign interference, until they felt sufficiently strong to doff the mask and throw their gauntlet to Austria.

But they had soon to learn that if 'Italy proposes, Austria disposes.' Ferdinand of Naples obtained leave from his revolted subjects to attend the Congress of Verona, and was there easily relieved from his oaths by the pope's legate, though Heaven knows that king never needed any great inducement, nor ever evinced great scruples, to charge his conscience with a perjury. Hence at the head, I should rather say, at the tail, of Austrian armies, he marched against the rebels yet unarmed and discordant, and the torch of revolt kindled in that kingdom without resistance, without resistance was quenched.

Similar events had meanwhile taken place in Piedmont. Prince Albert of Carignano, who, out of juvenile ambition, had sided with the liberals, and suffered himself to be saluted king of Italy, no sooner saw the storm gathering, than he gave up his accomplices and hastened to Verona to throw himself at the feet of the Congress. There the old king, Victorius Amadeus, having refused to violate the oath by which he was bound to his subjects, was compelled to abdicate in favour of Charles Felix, his brother, who, being entirely unpledged, was most ready to comply with every wish of the allies.

Rome, Milan, and the petty states of Central Italy, had stood awaiting events. Prevented by unfavourable circumstances and by false views of faint-hearted policy, from taking an open part in the movement, they had secretly seconded the efforts of the Piedmontese and Neapolitans, for what was tacitly understood to be the national cause, and were in consequence involved in their fate. The active police of Austria exposed plots and conspiracies, where they were and where they were not. Everywhere prisons were filled and scaffolds erected: the days of terror had arrived.

In that emergency, the government of Maria Louisa proceeded with its wonted clemency. General Neipperg refused his countenance to any effusion of blood. A few Carbonari were cast into the prisons of St. Elizabeth, and hence conveyed, for a change of air, to Compiano; a few others, availing themselves of opportune warnings, sough their safety abroad. The sentence of death that had been pronounced against two young men of high rank and high expectation, was commuted into transportation for life, and they were actually seen chained hand to hand with ruffians and highwaymen, and sent to the galleys of Genoa. These were of course mere trifles to the bloody tragedies acting at Turin and Naples, and the horrors of Spielberg and Modena.

Scaffolds, dungeons and banishments, could not fail to have their usual effect. The passions of the indolent multitude were awakened: they started with horror; they looked on with sympathy. What had been at first a timid conspiracy became an open rebellion—what had been the opinion of a few, became the passion of all; the spirit of resistance pervaded all minds; the march of the governments was checked at every step; in all controversies, the public opinion pronounced against power. The victims were followed in their exile with anxious benedictions; their prisons were visited as the shrines of martyrs; their blood was gathered at the foot of the scaffold, and thrown towards heaven with prayers for a speedy hour of revenge. Politics had become the favourite topic of all sides. They preyed upon the heart like a consumptive disease. Pleasure had lost its zest—theatres and masquerades their attraction. The deserted abodes of vice mourned over the improvement of morals.

Such was the state of Italy in 1830, at the epoch of the French Revolution of July. We have already said that the first tidings of those 'glorious days' had the effect of an electric shock. France, that nation fatally destined in our days to drag all Europe after her, had raised the first cry. Belgium had followed her example. Poland was grappling for life with her northern oppressor. Now or never, it was said, was the time for Italy, to start from her torpor. They forgot that if anything is to be expected of Italy, it is only when she leads, not when she follows.

The members of old political associations rallied: the scattered links of the national bond were soldered anew; our exiles fretted and murmured from the other side of the Alps with that sanguine impatience which is but too natural in men living on regrets and hopes. Secret agents and emissaries, under a thousand disguises, traversed the country in every direction. All ancient measures of cautiousness and mystery were now thrown disdainfully aside. The lovers of their country met and recognized each other at a glance, and saw each other's faces radiant with pride and confidence. Private feuds were forgotten—private interest sacrificed; the differences of rank were levelled—provincial or municipal prejudices silenced.

By such symptoms the dawn of liberty manifests itself everywhere; it is a univers a reconciliation, a reform, a redemption. T h men in power looked sad and pale, thei

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tone was considerably lowered; they put on their kindest look, their best smile. When the minds of numbers were thus disposed, what remained was, to give the re-excited energy a favourable direction. For this the secret societies provided, and the people, as usual, looked to them for a signal.

From the unfortunate issue of their experiments of 1820, the Carbonari had derived useful and salutary instruction. They had learned that *if Italy proposes, Austria disposes;* that the independence of the Italian states was merely nominal; that all their kings, princes, and pope, were nothing but Austrian tools; that wherever war began it was only at Vienna that peace might be sealed; that one was the enemy they had to deal with, that one the cause of the country. To that one object they then directed their efforts, so as to prepare all elements for an instantaneous, universal explosion. They knew that the greatest effect was to be expected from Naples and Piedmont, the two largest sections of the country, and, by their standing armies, the main strength of the nation. The Italian soldiery, brave and well trained, composed, in great part, of the veterans of Napoleon's armies, impatient of the severe discipline, and of the stagnating life of their garrisons, had always been, and were now more than ever, impatient for a new state of things. A revolution at Naples and Turin was now easier than ever; and the principal actors in the conspiracy spoke of it with a boldness which nothing but the certainty of success could inspire.

An unexpected incident, however, occurred to impede the regular march of affairs, and the impatience of the friends of liberty hurried the project to its injury.

Charles Felix, King of Sardinia, was on his deathbed; his heir-apparent was that Prince Albert of Carignano, who had, as we have said, espoused the popular party in 1821, and in that first effervescence been hailed king of Italy. His subsequent treasons and cowardly apostasy had, it is true, disgraced his name; still it was a general belief, that at his accession he would stand at least, through ambition, at the head of the movement. The immediate death of the old king would thus have prevented in Piedmont all effusion of blood, and its armies, sound and untouched, would, guided by their new king, have marched over Lombardy, where the great contest with Austria was to be waged.

Here we can recognize the wily policy and the want of confidence of our ancient conspirators. The Carbonari of 1820, especially those who were urging on matters from abroad, could not be aware of the progress of public opinion in Italy during the last ten years. They were still tampering and bargaining with princes, and putting all their trust in the army—on the people they had no faith. They flattered themselves, as I have said somewhere else, that liberty could be had for the asking. They had forgotten the prophetic lines of their bard:—

'Liberty smiles on daring hearts,
And wills that never swerve;
By hard-fought strife she's won—her charms
None but the brave deserve.'[a]

France, meanwhile, had already succeeded in arming Belgium, Poland, and a good part of Germany, in the cause of its newly-adopted principles. Italy alone was silent, and her apparent indolence, and the slow and cautious proceedings of her Carbonari, excited the discontent of the French, who wished to see Austria engaged in some different work from that of watching their own policy.

From the first day of his accession, Louis Philippe had resolved to purchase his own security at the cost of the honour of France, and of the ruin of Europe. Belgium, Poland, and Germany, were already fighting his battles, whilst Italy seemed yet reluctant to listen to his wily suggestions. We read in the French official newspapers, by turns, the most flattering appeals and the most violent upbraidings. Every speech delivered from the emancipated tribune in the House of Deputies ended with that taunting burden, How long, Italy, how long?

Towards the end of December, 1830, under the administration of Perrier and Sebastiani, the French government announced, 'that *France* assumed not to be the *propagator* of liberal doctrines; that she would never, directly or indirectly, conspire against the peace of her neighbours, or take part with the people against their legitimate governments; but that, in return, no government, under pretext of alliance, should interfere with the political revolutions which might take place in other countries; France being determined to use all her power to secure fair play for the two parties, in cases of political differences between sovereign and subjects.'

This proclamation, too well known in Europe under the name of *Non-intervention*, determined the course of the Italian revolutionists. The existence of every one of the so-called *independent* governments of Italy, entirely relied upon the overbearing influence of Austria. That influence withdrawn, they could never stand for an hour. The smallest states of Central Italy, certain of success since the question was now to be decided within the limits of their own territory, could not be induced to wait any longer.

One fine morning of February, 1831, a few days after the accession of Gregory XVI., the present Pope, the students of the University of Bologna, assembling in haste in a coffee-house in that city, without arms, marched in a crowd to the palace of the Cardinal Legate, and peremptorily signified their determination no longer to acknowledge pope, cardinal, or priest, as a temporal ruler. The cardinal had nothing to re-

[a] 'Libertà non fallisce ai volenti
Ma il sentier de' perigli ell' addita
Ma promessa a chi ponvi la vita,
Non è premiod' inerte desir.'

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ply; he called for his carriage, and bade the postillions take the road towards Rome. The Bolognese disarmed the Pope's troops and carabineers; pulled down the keys of St. Peter, and sang ribald verses against him. They created a national militia, installed a provisional government, and cried '*Viva l'Italia!*' (Huzza for Italy!)

Faenza, Rimini, Ravenna, and all the towns of Romagna, followed the example with as much rapidity as the mail could bring them the tidings, and liberty ran wild and victorious to the walls of Ancona. The garrison of that citadel deserted their posts, and joined the insurgents. The ardent youth of Romagna, with arms and artillery, and with experienced leaders, set out for the capital. In less than a fortnight they very nearly arrived in sight of the Vatican. While the revolution was thus irresistibly proceeding to the south, it was no less successful in the north.

The Duke of Modena, the most extravagantly cruel of Italian tyrants, was already at war with his subjects. During the first effervescence of revolutionary spirits, some well-meaning but short-sighted politicians, had entered into some negotiations with him, offering him the sceptre of Italy, if he would only aid them to wrench it from the talons of the two-headed eagle of Austria. They were some of our old Carbonari, incorrigibly prone to put their trust in princes, and who fancied they could, on the ground of his acknowledged sagacity, firmness, and energy, and of the immense pecuniary means he could throw in the balance of the national destinies, easily overcome the strong animosity prevailing in Italy against the Duke's name.

But his favourers had soon perceived that he was too unanimously execrated even to be mentioned in an undertaking of a similar nature. Mistrust arose between them and the tyrant, and when the non-intervention was first proclaimed, they forsook him altogether. A conspiracy was long since brewing in his petty capital. The Duke discovered it, and ascertaining that some of the insurgents were assembled in the house of Ciro Menotti, a conspicuous citizen, and one of his favourites, he led his battalions and artillery against them, besieged and bombarded the house, and took it by storm in two hours.

This happened on the night of February 4th. On the following morning, the Duke had hardly taken breath from his exploits, when tidings reached him of the events of Bologna. He put himself at the head of his victorious force, took his treasures, his children, and his prisoners, under his escort, and hastened beyond the Po, to place himself under the shield of Austria. His unfortunate subjects, recovered from their terrors, sent a hearty execration after him, and hoped they were rid of him for ever. Thus had the insurrection reached the confines of the territory of Maria Louisa.

The animosity between this illustrious lady and her humble subjects was now at its highest pitch. Already, in the course of the preceding year, a rebellious spirit had manifested itself in every class. The public revenues had been totally exhausted, and the successors of General Neipperg, worthless emissaries of Austria, had had recourse to the desperate expedient of paper currency. A tremendous riot of the labouring people forced the government to abandon that measure.

The unexampled proceeding of government towards us, the arrest of eight young men of good family, so unprovoked, so arbitrary, and the aggravating circumstances of our dismal journey, which we, of course, took good care to exaggerate in our correspondence with our friends, had even a more wonderful effect than, in my fondest hopes, I could have dared to anticipate. We were set down as heroes and martyrs, and the whole town espoused our cause with an alarming enthusiasm.

The pride of the highest and the interests of the lowest classes were thus equally wounded when the national *tricolour* standard was seen waving on the bridge of the Enza, on the Modenese territory, five or six miles east of Parma. It was then carnival, and, as I have noted before, the weather was uncommonly mild and lovely. The roads to the bridge were covered with people of all ranks, men, women, and children—walking, riding, driving, to salute the '*rainbow of liberty.*' The young women cut up green, red, and white ribands, to make tri-coloured cockades and scarfs. The young men loaded their guns, and whetted the points of their poniards.

Maria Louisa armed her twelve hundred grenadiers, levelled her six cannons, and harangued her troops in the square of the palace. Day and night her dragoons, with drawn swords and lighted torches, ran madly in different directions to clear the streets. There was a dead silence; no movement of the people betokened that they had anything at stake.

But horses cannot run, nor soldiers watch, for ever and ever. After three days of such vigorous patrolling, men and beasts were exhausted and sleepy. Maria Louisa asked a reinforcement of the Austrian garrison at Placentia; the Austrian garrison replied, that they had no orders.

The people peeped out of the windows. From the windows they began to fire at random, to scare the dragoons as they passed. Then the boldest sallied out in the streets; they met, they rallied, they joined in formidable bands, and drove those weary squadrons before them. Square after square, and row after row, the ducal troops lost ground, and the scene of skirmishing was transferred to the doors of the palace. There the two factions stood confronting each other, each in their ranks, each under their leaders, measuring with their eyes the chances of the day.

In that dreadful suspense, the duchess, terrified, all bathed in tears, appeared on

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her balcony, appealing to the generous feelings of the multitude. The sight of her produced an undefinable sensation. The people started forward as if to hear her words, rushed in a single mass, as a single body, against her guards and artillery, and drove them against the palace walls. Her army was disarmed and dispersed under her eyes, and, without firing a gun, or levelling a bayonet, she found herself at the mercy of her subjects. Soon a national guard was organized, whose several divisions were sent to secure the possession of the fortress, of the gaol, and of the gates of the city. The furious mob scoured the streets, crying death against a few of Maria Louisa's worst minions and courtiers, who, however, succeeded, through the interference of the most moderate among the liberals, to make good their escape. Before sunset, order and silence were restored to the victorious metropolis. On the following morning, the municipal council, attended by a vast number of the most respectable citizens, proceeded to the appointment of a provisional regency, a generalissimo, and four colonels of the national guard, and in other acts and measures of similar nature, which Maria Louisa was compelled to sanction by her name.

After two days of feverish anxiety, the royal captive, betaking herself to her natural defence of tears and swoons, obtained her release. In vain the shrewd policy of some of the old Carbonari remonstrated against a measure by which the people would be deprived of an important hostage in case of rupture with Austria. The chivalrous hearts of the youths who governed the insurgents were not proof against the aspect of feminine sorrow. A squadron of national guards was drawn up; one of her carriages was brought forward, and, surrounded by armed citizens in a formidable array, with tricolour banners waving around her, while national songs made the air ring again, she was escorted for twelve miles, to the banks of the Po. There she bade farewell to subjects who loved her better the greater the distance from which they viewed her.

She had no sooner withdrawn, than the people experienced how much better no master is than the kindest of masters. They could not recover from the intoxication of their blessed independence. No order was broken, no law violated. Public faith and honour were pledged for the public tranquillity. The revolution of Paris had lasted three days; ours was over in less than three hours. On the pavement of Paris there lay ten thousand dead bodies; at Parma there was scarcely a drop of blood shed. Charles X. effected his escape in spite of an incensed populace; Maria Louisa obtained her release from the clemency of her people. But the revolution of July in France was compared to an earthquake; the insurrection at Parma was only what the Americans call 'a storm in a tea-pot.'

THE SISTER'S DREAM.

(BY HAUFF.)

TRANSLATED BY NEWTON IVORY LUCAS.

She sleeps. It is the fading year's last night,
And when the matin bell again resounds,
It speaks a new year's greeting on the ear.

'Tis said, in this the year's last midnight, that
The shades of those we love forsake their graves,
That souls descend upon the wings of love
From heaven, to visit once again their homes
On earth. She too, my sister, thought of this,
Believed mayhap the fable, when she sought
Within her quiet chamber soft repose,
And tears bedewed her cheeks,—but 'twas not fear,
The childish dread of that mysterious
Return of the departed, which o'ercast
Her brows:—no—no—the memory of the dear
Beloved—the tender sorrow felt above
The grave of friends, relations, filled her soul—
She sinks her knee—she prays for them—she weeps!

She slumbers! and the last ones near her couch—
The lovely dead—approach her quiet pillow;
The sisters of her happy youth arise
From spheres where what is lovely never fades!

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And knowest thou them?—Thou seest them ne'er again
As blooming forms of earth;—no more, as when
With thee they gathered flowers and planted wreaths;—
No more as when around the winter hearth
They told thee fairy-tales of secret dread;—no more,
As when with mirth and jest thou bound'st for them
Their flowery locks upon the rosy May.
All this is past—thou seest them so no more—
As such they sank into their early grave.
They now approach thy couch as holy spirits;
A halo—not of earth, but heavenly—now
Plays round their sacred brows; but still the wreaths,
Though long since faded—and the youthful gem
Of beauty, though no more—the love they bore
They bear thee still, my sister. Softer than
When earth adorned them is their beauty now,
And gently—mildly—as the lamp's pale shine
Which falls upon thy slumbering features, they
Approach thee, sister, and their heavenward eyes,
Beaming with fire immortal, meet and greet
Thy mental vision, as they smile on thee!

They bless thee, sister—from their holy lips
A tone goes forth, as from the Æolian harp
When evening breezes play amongst its chords:
"Beloved sister—still we think of thee,
And blessings strew we o'er thy virtuous path.
Whene'er thine eyes, upon the rise of morn,
Or when the heavens are blue at noon, look forth,
They fall on us unseen; when fixed upon
The fleecy clouds, which sail at evening tide
Along the vault of heaven, thou look'st on us,
Who sail with them; and on the moon's soft beam
Which falls, like friendship's offering, on thy couch,
We rise, thy tears attending, from the earth,
To those celestial regions, now our home!"

'Tis thus they whisper,—thus they bend their heads
To kiss the brow of the dear sleeper,—then
With outspread wings,—ere sleep forsakes her eyes
And makes them visible,—upon the beams
Of the pale moon, ascend to heavenly spheres!
Yes, *there*,—where else could sister-love her home
Eternal find? Less violent than fraternal love,
Nor thus exprest in words of heartfelt import.
'Tis like the mountain lake, which quieter,
More faithful mirrors back the smiling sky,
The peaceful shore, than rapid mountain stream;
On whose impetuous waters shore and sky
Are mingled—broken,—indistinct—confused!

Yes, deep and holy is a sister's love,
And never perhaps can such assume an image
More tender—more affecting, than when formed
In tears above the graves of the departed
In dreams whose image is the sainted dead.

ROUGH MATERIAL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'IX POEMS BY V.'

THE church now called St. Etienne du Mort in Paris is dedicated to St. Geneviève, and among the ciceroni who are a little out of date, still bears her name. It was under the latter designation that I was directed to it, and I understood all the better for the mistake, the pictures representing her martyrdom and her miracles, and was prepared for the sight of her tomb, which stands in great state in a chapel of the north aisle. It is in the shape of a great stone chest, and the top was covered, when I saw it,

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with garlands of immortelles, both yellow and white. I remember no shrine before which so many tallow candles were burning; and the demand both for flowers and tapers is so great, that a poor woman has established a trade in them close to the shrine, and has added to her stock a number of copies of a little book, entitled 'Abrégé de la Vie de St. Geneviève, patronne de la ville de Paris et de toute la France.' I am a Protestant, and therefore anxious to know the private history of the religion of Roman Catholics, which, of course, does not penetrate easily to us, any more than ours does to them; so I went up to the good lady's stall, with fifteen sous in my hand, to purchase this story of the saint. I found it was such new reading to a Protestant, that I became enamoured of it, and anxious to provide myself with a little more; and therefore I returned to the stall, to ask what else it could furnish. The good woman was at this moment very busy, acting the part of purchaser herself; for another woman, of her own degree, had sat down beside her, and was offering her a bargain of two small flat fish. This transaction was veiled a little from the eyes of the devout with the corner of the seller's apron: but both were talking it over so eagerly, that my question was plainly an unwelcome interruption. Observing this, I turned over the stores of her books for myself, but found only a repetition of the life of St. Geneviève. On the cover of this book, however, I perceived that it was announced for sale, not only 'dans l'église Parisienne de St. Étienne du Mort,' but also at the author's, 'A. Pilau de la Frest, Rue des Noyers, No. 37.' Leaving, therefore, the women to bargain for the flat fish, I set off on my way to the Rue des Noyers, a street I already knew in my walks through the old part of Paris.

It was a very hot day, and the essence of those many stinks which pervade Paris, ascended on the atmosphere. The Rue des Noyers stank worst of all, owing to its extreme narrowness, and the full state of the gutter, which runs down the middle of the street. It was very noisy also, the rough large stones giving full effect to every vehicle that passed along it, and shrill cries of ambulatory trades and of children filled up the concert. No. 37 was in keeping with the rest of the street—dirty, ragged, and ancient. It was a house with a court; and a porter, looking from a side door, informed me that M. Pilau de la Frest must be sought at the door to the right, up one pair of stairs.

Thither I ascended, and expected that the door at which I knocked was to disclose within the bookseller's shop of which I was in pursuit; but instead of that a kitchen only presented itself to my view, and I was beginning to fear A. Pilau was still to be sought, when the little maiden who acted as porter told me, in answer to my question, that he was her father, and that at an opposite door of the room I should find him. I crossed the kitchen, therefore, and, having a permission to enter, turned the lock, and found myself in what might well appear, compared with the sounds and smells I had passed through, a better world. Without, all was noise and dirt; within, and defended by double doors from nose-offences, was a low, large room, at the end of which two glass doors stood open to a space adorned with trees and grass.

The floor was bare, the room cool, and, best joy of all, it was quiet. I had not heard any silence before since I came to Paris, and now I found it in the midst of the Rue des Noyers. There were unpainted book-cases against the walls, and in the middle of the room a long table, covered with papers and books, at which sat a tall, very spare man, with a cap on his head, and a loose long coat on his body, employed upon little pages of the smallest writing, while some sheets of print lay near him, bearing much the appearance of having been brought there by the devil. The things I saw quite put out the thoughts which brought me there; and though it was necessary to tell the meaning of my visit, yet I hesitated how to address the man who was so unlike the A. Pilau that I had conceived. He rose, however, uncoiling his lengthy person, and received me with a face of grave and rather unsocial aspect; as if he was bound in some degree to show the courtesy of a tradesman, but neither liked nor wholly lived by the employment.

His first words confirmed this impression. He said briefly, he had no copies of the 'Abrégé,' by him; I could get them at the Sacristy of St. Etienne.

'Or have you any other lives of saints?' I inquired still more diffidently.

'Not any,' he said.

I did not in the least care about them by this time, but I did care very much to see more of the garden, and to know who was the man, and what he was doing. He looked poor; the room, though so cool and quiet, was that of a poor student, and by his occupation he seemed to belong to the sad tribe who have to seek life from the inkbottle the best way they can. Yet there was a sober romance about him, which you sometimes see take the place in a Frenchman of his ordinary vivacity and indifference to life and its troubles; and his manner was so grave, and told so little beyond his words, that he was plainly not inclined to exaggerate or exhibit his private history and feelings. I advanced a step or two towards the garden, and quitting the subject of traffic, began to compliment him on his abode. He answered that it *was* very pretty; and seeing me disposed to look nearer, begged me to walk into the garden if I were so inclined. I did, indeed, more than half ask permission, and profiting by it at once, I went down the few wooden steps, followed by my host. The garden was an irregular grass-plot, the grass cut down and lying about, and plenty of wild bushes, such as elder and hazel, grow-

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ing around it. Among and behind a part of these appeared cabbages and lentils, straggling gooseberry bushes, and a few marigolds. Just opposite the steps, across the grass-plot, was a slender rail, sloping as picturesquely as in a country church-yard, which emerged from and went back into the elder and nut bushes. A few elms grew above; they were cut a little, so as to make their heads even with one another, and through their branches appeared a church-window in ruin. No flowers adorned the garden but those of the elder-trees and a few marigolds. There were some pigeons in a wooden cage, and two little girls sat on the grass, and threw it about for their amusement. I was very anxious to hear anything my host might have to tell about this scene, or about himself; but his reserve continued unabated until we had returned into the house, and until my curiosity suggested a more effectual method than simple questioning. Looking anxiously at him, to see how best to proceed, I fancied that there was more of a philosophic apathy of countenance about him than quite suited with the compiler of the life of 'St. Geneviève, patronne de la ville de Paris et de toute la France.' Besides, he had received my inquiry respecting 'any lives of saints' with the tone in which we sometimes say, 'Such a man *is* my cousin, but I know very little about him;' and it occurred to me that, perhaps, the sale of these traditions suited his purse better than his inclination, and that it would flatter him if I hazarded this supposition aloud. Accordingly, taking my hat in my hand, as if about to leave him, I first glanced at the small written pages which he had laid aside to receive me, and then said,

'I ought to apologize, sir, for disturbing you in your occupation, of which I know something of the interest myself. Your name on this little book,' I continued, showing St. Geneviève, 'introduced me to you; but you seem to have before you the materials of more absorbing studies.'

My friend smiled at this, and gently shrugging his shoulders, answered, 'That book is for the people. Sometimes I have leisure to write for myself.'

'And the work before you?' I said—— But here he sighed, and answered,

'No, for the people again, or rather I should say, for my own little people at home, for otherwise they must miss their dinner.'

He had begun now, and gradually I got him to go on even into his history. It was, however, by slow degrees.

'This house!' said he, when he grew a little warmer to the subject. 'You admired this house just now, and so you well might, for in my opinion it is the prettiest in Paris. Is not the arch of that old window unlike anything you ever thought to see in the heart of a great town? and those wild bushes which quite shut out all the houses, are a solitude such as the king himself cannot boast of in the gardens of the Tuileries. I have passed all my happy hours at this desk, and in the sight of those trees.'

'I easily believe you, sir; you may create any world you like for yourself here, without fear of the changes which exist in the realities of life.'

But A. Pilau shook his head.

'No, sir, no; I cannot say that, but I won't talk in mysteries; if I talk at all, I'll tell you what my situation is. But shall I talk at all,' he added to himself, not to me.

'If *I* have any voice in the question, sir, pray do,' said I; but he seemed to yield to his own arguments, not mine.

'I don't see why not,' said he, in an under tone. 'You're an Englishman. You seem to talk but lightly of St. Geneviève. Do you care for the royal family? Very likely you are a Whig—but even then, you are not the subject of this Louis Philippe. Besides, you may help me. Well, sir, you must know that though I am not old enough to remember the days of the Bourbons, I love them by tradition. My family belonged to them and fell with them, and brought me up in the love of them and in the service of Buonaparte. This house belonged to my ancestors generations ago, and I have never *known* nor possessed any other; I had an uncle who was a secular priest, and yonder church, which is now a storehouse, was his. My first impressions are about being called up at night out of my bed, to go with my uncle to the church, where he used to celebrate mass by stealth; and I was the acolyte. It was extremely fortunate for me to have lived at a time when so romantic a scene was possible. I wrote a story about it. It was used as a storehouse for wood, and we had made a chapel inside the logs. Well, sir, I was obliged to go into the army, and I served in Spain, but I particularly disliked the service, and once being supposed dead, I took advantage of the circumstance, and returned quite privately to France. This did not advance my fortune with the government, from whom I was obliged to conceal my restoration to health; and being reduced to extreme distress, I married, thinking that the change of my situation would either force my brain to suggest some plan which would make my fortune, or that the desperation of two people at extremity would enable both to take a resolution fatal to our lives.'

At this period of my new friend's story, there came a sound as of some one struggling with the latch to get in, and he very patiently suspended his narrative, like a man accustomed to interruptions, and turned his eyes with their large upper eyelids placidly raised towards the door.

'Father,' said a little girl, entering at last, 'mother wants some more of your novel to boil the broth.'

A. Pilau got up, and taking a bundle of papers out of a cupboard, looked them over and turned down a page at some distance in the manuscript.

'Tell your mother,' said he, 'not to burn

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beyond page forty-five; I want to keep that part.'

The little girl took it, and A. Pilau returned to his place, and was going on with his story; but I could not help interrupting him.

'Sir,' I said, 'is it possible that you can part with the fruit of your genius so easily, and for such purposes; and is this the only expedient which the heroism of your wife has suggested?'

'Alas! sir,' he answered, 'her message did not strike me as anything extraordinary. I had forgotten that anybody but myself could take an interest in what you are pleased to call, upon credit, the fruits of my genius. But so I too once thought them; and even now, I cannot so entirely divest myself of the feeling, but what I fondly preserve a part here and there, as you saw I did just now, and still believe they will give immortality to my name.'

'But, sir,' I said, 'forgive me,—I have never, till I saw this small publication to-day, become acquainted with any of your works.'

'No, sir; it is impossible you should, since they are all—all, that is, which my wife has not burned—still in yonder cupboard. I have frequently presented them to the booksellers, but having nobody to present me, have never found favour in their sight, and they contented themselves with employing me as the poor Arabian (you call him Godolphin in England) was employed, in the dustman's cart, doing the base works of the streets, while others, whom he could have outrun, were careering for gold and glory on the level plain.'

I thought this trope sufficiently complimentary without adding anything on my part, and therefore let him go on with his story.

'The occupation they gave me, though disgusting, was sufficiently productive to maintain my wife and myself, and to enable me to continue to live in a part of my ancestors' house, though no longer, I am sorry to say, absolutely belonging to me; but at the moment when my circumstances were most at ease, that glorious event occurred, which would have been equally welcome, whether it had found me in a dungeon or a palace. From that moment——'

'But what was it, sir?' I asked.

'What! Has there been more than one? If so, I was not aware of it,' said A. Pilau, coldly. 'The Bourbons were replaced on the throne.'

'Ah, sir, I'm afraid,' I said, 'that you have proved the truth which many other faithful adherents have proved before you—that princes are ungrateful.'

'No,' said my friend; 'my experience does not confirm that charge; on the contrary, I enjoyed the favour of the noble family of Bourbon in an extraordinary way.'

'In what way, sir?'

'Sir,' said A. Pilau, 'I was permitted, after Henri V. was born, to accompany the suite of his royal mother in the progress she made to Chambord—the property which the army, as you doubtless know, bought and presented to their prince.'

'I know it perfectly well,' I answered—and so I did since he had told me, though not before.

'I was allowed, or rather encouraged,' continued Pilau, 'to make a journal of this journey, and upon asking permission, received the cheerful assent of the du ss to publish it.'

'And a reward?' I said.

'Yes,' said Pilau mournfully; 'the reward of glory.'

'And did not this make you known to the booksellers?'

'No; for I published it at my own expense,' said Pilau.

'But the duchess patronized it, no doubt?'

'O yes, indeed, she did,' said Pilau, tears coming into his eyes at the recollection of her favour; 'she accepted a copy, which I presented to her on my own knees.'

'Bon,' said I, and I don't know any English word which could have said so much, and meant so little.

Pilau was satisfied, and went on.

'This publication entirely ruined me, and since that time I have never been able to get above the debt I incurred. I do what I can. I write whatever is set me, considering my pen, when so basely employed, in the light of a spade which turns up any soil for bread. I write a saint's legend for one bookseller, and as licentious a ballad for another as I know how. The captivity of my duchess at Nantes both broke my heart and suggested to my pen the invention of a totally false story of her intrigues before her marriage; and another day I bought clothes for my children with an account which, I dare say, might be true, though I do not know, of the charities of Charles X. at Edinburgh. But my pains cannot reach my necessities; they grow around me to such a degree, that I can see no other remedy for them, but either to quit this house and beg my bread, or to die. I prefer the latter; and if my wife would but consent, I should determine upon some easy mode of ending the family of De la Forrest; but I am sorry to say she does not appear to possess that philosophic spirit which I hoped for when I married her, and if ever I hint at such a thing, she shows the most decided repugnance. Yet I could write the story before we did it, and it would certainly attract attention.'

A. Pilau fell into a meditation upon this last reflection of his own, and I ventured to interrupt it at last by inquiring what in that case he would do with his manuscripts.

'Ah,' said he, 'I would not destroy them. They are the truth of my heart, the things I have seen, the stories that have been told me, the characters I have observed. When I wrote *them*, I wrote for the joy of writing, not for bread. The necessity of life obliges me frequently to sacrifice such pages as I consider inferior, but as you saw to-day, I cling to the good parts, and should have the more pleasure in dying, because there would

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be then no longer any broth to boil which would demand the sacrifice of my papers.'

'I wish, sir,' said I, 'you would let *me* see them.'

'You may if you wish it, though they are not prepared for inspection. They are the matter which I have always intended to use when the good day should come. They resemble an artist's sketch-book, being jotted down from nature in order to furnish a work of art in future. Indeed I have accustomed myself to call the whole collection my Rough Material.'

'Well, sir, I think I shall like them the better for that. Let me try at least, and it is possible that in England, where trade is very active, some bookseller would be found more enterprising than your Frenchmen. If so, they would give you money for the manuscript, with no further risk on your part.'

'In that case,' said A. Pilau, 'I need not kill myself.'

V.

HISTORY OF THE JEWS,*

FROM THE DECLINE OF THE MACCABEES TO THE PRESENT DAY.

BY M. CAPEFIGUE.

CHAPTER VI.—*Continued.*

Appearance of Christianity in the Synagogue, and of its progress and ultimate triumph under Constantine.

These injurious and passionate expressions, especially when we consider that the discussion took place between two men who wore the philosopher's garb, may give us an idea of the acerbity of these religious disputes, at the time when Christianity, detaching itself entirely from the doctrines of the synagogue, soared towards its loftier destinies. A more striking example even than this is offered in the objections of the Jew, whom Celsus introduces in his '*Discourse of Truth*,' to combat the rising religion of Jesus Christ.†

The work of the Epicurean philosopher, the boldest and most ingenious of all the productions directed against Christianity, has only reached posterity, as is well known, from its refutation by the learned Origen. Mocking by turns the traditions of mankind at large, and the particular books of the Jews, Celsus has put his arguments against the Old Testament in the mouth of a Jew. 'Your Nazarene,' he says, 'is no more Christ than any other of the prophets. How is it that this Messiah, the anointed of the Lord, who was to appear in all the splendour of his glory, and with a sword in his hand, to rule over the kings of the earth, has chosen a lousy manger for his palace, and poor sinners and publicans for his disciples? Why, hardly is he born, than this Messiah condemns himself to a wandering and vagabond life: and as if the fear of death could enter into the heart of a God, he flies into Egypt to escape the sword of Herod. And it is to follow this vile impostor that you have forsaken your ancient law! If he had been really the Christ, ought not we to have known him—we who prophesied his coming? As to the infamous life of the Nazarene, it has been travestied by his disciples; they have only written it to vindicate the honour of their master.'

At the same time the books of the Rabbins sought to tarnish, by assertions still more outrageous, the birth and life of Jesus of Nazareth. They represented the God of the Christians as the fruit of an adulterous intercourse. 'Brought up in the school of John the Baptist, Jesus had succeeded, by means of a subtle eloquence and magical deceptions, in seducing some among the people whom he took as his associates in the *revelation of his iniquity*. Tiberius, informed of his designs, and the disorders occasioned by his powerful predication, had him crucified as a common malefactor; his body had been dragged through the streets of Jerusalem amidst the rejoicings of all Israel: thrown into the common receptacle for criminals, his body had been swept away by a sudden inundation, and his enthusiastic disciples published in every corner of the earth that he had risen again, to seat himself at the right hand of his Father.*

At an epoch when the church produced such powerful orators, such blasphemies could not long remain unanswered. In his violent Apology, Tertullian arouses himself against the scattered remnants of the Jewish nation. 'The law of Moses was only given for a time; the covenant with Abraham had been realized in the new people sprung from his race: Israel is therefore condemned to eternal disgrace. The Parthian archer, the dark Abyssinian, the peoples of Armenia and of Phrygia, those of Cappadocia, Pontus, and Egypt, even Roman citizens, had worshipped the cross of Christ; and ye Israelites,' he cries, 'how can you still expect that Christ proceeding from Judah, according to your oracles, was to arise in Jerusalem? Where is now that royal family which was to reign over you, and the brilliant diadem which was to adorn its brows? What has become of that city of Bethlehem where he was born? You cannot even any longer approach Jerusalem; Sion is destroyed; Bethlehem is nothing but a heap of ruins,

* Continued from vol. x. p. 341.
† Origen contra Celsum.

* See a work which bears the title *Toldos Jehu*. It has been published by J. Cristoph. Wagenseilius, in his work entitled *Tela ignea Satanæ*, 2 vols. in 4to., and separately, under the head of Toldos Jehu, or Hist. Jeschud Nazareni, translated into Latin with the Hebrew text by Huldric; Lugduni Batav. 1705. I have in my possession a very rare copy.

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your land is desolate, as saith the prophet. Miserable people, you expect the Messiah; but where will he receive the kingly unction? Your temple is thrown down, and your city is in ashes.'*

To the natural animosities which these continual disputes occasioned, and which necessarily influenced the spirit of the Christian legislation when it gained the ascendant, may be added the opinion addressed by the faithful, that most of the heresies which afflicted the infant church were founded upon the perverse doctrines which had issued from the Synagogue. Next to paganism, and the systems which attached themselves to the religious harmony of the ancient world, nothing more awakened the fears, and excited the pious anger of the first Christians, than those false tenets which arose in contradiction to the orthodox faith. The three first centuries of the church were full of those corruptions of heresy, which, according to the expression of Tertullian, spread their poisons amongst the faithful, like a scorpion besliming the earth. When one contemplates, in fact, the vast catalogue of Christian heresies, it is easy to perceive that all have their foundation in two classes of opinions, proceeding from the synagogue: the first of these heresies, for instance those of the Ebimites, Corinthians, and Nazarenes, sprang from a too rigid adherence to the observances of the old law; while the second, those of the Docites and Gnostics, borrewed their combinations on the mystic numbers, and their system of a celestial emanation, from the Eastern philosophy and the Cabalistic doctrines. Simon, surnamed the Magician, the first of the heresiachs, Menander his disciple, and Valentinus, who enlarged their system, were Jews or Samaritans.†

The opinions which troubled the church were for the most part borrowed from the doctrines of the synagogue; and now if one remarks the strong excitement and indignation which the appearance of a heresy produced amongst the Christians, the vehemence with which Tertullian, or Clement of Alexandria, pursued it, it may be well supposed that the general conviction that Christianity was indebted for this fresh wound of its internal divisions to the corrupted tenets of the synagogue, contributed also to increase the animosity already existing between the Jews and Christians.

Such was the constitution of the Christian church, and the spirit of fraternity which reigned among the faithful, that these sentiments were communicated from breast to breast, and their dislikes as well as their attachments were equally felt and equally shared by the brethren of all the churches; the eloquence of the Christian orators was exerted in every assembly, in their love-feasts as well as in their metropolises; and it must be confessed that in place of calming the irritation and deadening the rancour of their minds, they too often preached up the most violent doctrines, and scattered words of fire amongst their hearers.

Let us picture to ourselves, for instance, the prodigious effect which would be produced in the midst of a congregation of Christians piously assembled at the foot of the cross, on hearing these words of St. John Chrysostom, which we take from his orations against the Jews.

'My brethren, I would desire to continue to preach before you, showing how that God is beyond our humble comprehension; but a crying evil this day demands my attention, which is, your intercourse with the Jews. Reject from your very hearts the guilty practice of visiting and associating with these men, who were once indeed the children by adoption of the great God, but who have become worse than dogs. They have rejected Jesus Christ, and cry out, We have no other king but Cæsar! The synagogue has become like a shameless prostitute; it should be to us as a cavern of hyenas and wild beasts.'*

This general aversion to the Jews, on the part of the Christian church, was farther evinced by the regulations of the councils, a kind of legislative enactments which obtained the greatest authority over the society of the faithful. Already in the canons of the apostles we find a formal decision which prohibited Christians from entering the synagogues as well during the great feasts of the year, such as those of the purification and the passover, as on the simple sabbath day.† The clerk who may have broken these rules, is likened to those pontiffs of Jesus Christ, who had shown their weakness by sacrificing to the gods on the sacred tripod. If a wavering faith had induced any Christian to deposit offerings in the Gentile temple, or to furnish oil for the supply of the sabbath lamp, the same sentence of excommunication was launched against him, and he could only merit pardon by the most sincere repentance, and by performing penance at the door of the church, where, clothed in the meanest garments, and his head covered with ashes, he received his absolution from the hands of the deacon.

The Council of Nice extends its prohibition still farther. 'Neither the clergy nor laity may sit down to meals with Jews.' In the formal festivities of antiquity, it was often impossible for the Christian to preserve the purity of his faith and the simplicity of his creed: the believer, whether, luxuriously re-

* Tertull. Apolog.

† The book of Epiphanius on heresies is certainly the most complete; but St. Epiphanius, a very credulous historian, has related a quantity of facts which his superstitious reason has explained in a false or imperfect manner. He is a necessary, but a faulty guide in tracing the history of heretics. St. Irenæus has more philosophy, as well as Justin Martyr and Origen. The best source from whence to draw on this subject, is evidently those rare but exact fragments of the works of the heresiarchs, which have survived the war declared against them by the orthodox.

* St. John Chrysost. in Judæos, orat. 2.

† Apost. cum Labbe Collect. concil. t. i.

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clining at the table of the Gentiles, he ate of the flesh of victims, and passively beheld the pouring out of libations to the gods, or, partaking of the more humble repasts of the Jews, he divided with them the roots and bitter herbs of the passover, found his faith not less exposed to dangers: for the solemn decrees of the church repeatedly proscribed the dangerous familiarity of these common entertainments between the Christians, the Jews, and the Gentiles.*

At the same time, the Council of Elvira strictly prohibited soliciting the blessing of the Rabbins, to call down a fruitful and abundant harvest. The synagogue had still some customs in common with the church, and the obscure faith of the Christians in the rural districts invoked the blessing of the Rabbins with the same fervour as the prayers of the priests.†

At last, the Councils of Laodicea and Carthage interdicted the acceptance of the smallest gifts from the Jews, and even the most innocent intercourse with them: though the bishops were not to close the doors of the church against them. 'They may be allowed to attend the reading of the gospel and the instructions of the priests; but when the hour for the supper of the catechumens arrives, and when the preparations are begun for the celebration of the mysteries, the love-feasts, and the breaking of the holy bread, then they must be sent away, so as not to be able to pollute by their presence the ceremonies of the church, and reveal its secret rites.'‡

CHAPTER VII.

State of the Jews in the empire from Constantine to the publication of the Code of Justinian.

A. D. 313—527.

While the triumphant church hurled its thunders against the synagogue, the imperial legislation, though imbibing this new spirit and tendency of the Christian world, proceeded less vehemently in the path of political rigour. The empire, in the midst of which Constantine had just uplifted the standard of the cross, had not experienced a thorough revolution, and the conversion of the son of Helen had been less an imperative command than an example to his subjects. Without doubt, the number of Christians would be considerably increased by the change of religion in their prince, but most of the princes adhered to the manners and religion of their ancestors. When Constantine arrived at Rome, the senate celebrated his triumph in the Capitol, as in the palmy days of Augustus and the great divinities of Olympus, and incense burned in honour of the prince on the old altars of victory. Until the utter defeat of Licinius, and the foundation of Constantinople, the new disciple of Christ protected with impartial favour all the subjects of his empire, whatever might be their faith; and although, at the time of this last event, his power, more firmly established, had ventured openly to exhibit its partiality for the Christian religion, we shall see, nevertheless, that the laws relative to the Israelites became harsher and more severe, but slowly and by degrees. When Constantine gratefully accepted the title of Sovereign Pontiff of the gods of the Capitol—when the colleges of the priests, the caves of Mithra, the mysteries of Isis, and the temples of Cybele, were all permitted in the empire—it was impossible for the synagogue not to experience the benefit of that universal toleration which policy dictated to the master of the Roman world.*

Thus the first acts of the legislation of Constantine had rather for their object to reward the Jews who might embrace the Christian faith, than to persecute those who should persist in adhering to that of their ancestors.

Neophytes enjoyed various privileges, and the dignities of the state tended to inflame their zeal. There is a law in the Theodosian code, dated in the first years of the reign of Constantine, which punishes any Israelites who shall forcibly oppose the voluntary conversion of their brethren; and if we may rely on the testimony of Aboulpharages, more than twelve thousand Jews received the law of the Messiah, under Constantine and his immediate successor.†

Amongst the most remarkable conversions of this epoch, the church has preserved the remembrance of those of St. Epiphanius, the historian of the heresies, and of the priest Joseph, whom Constantine advanced to the pompous dignity of count. We shall relate them with some detail, because, amidst so many marvellous and credulous stories, they may enable us to appreciate the respective condition of the two religious societies then at variance. Epiphanius was born of Jewish parents, in a village of Syria; his mother, a widow, had exhausted her fortune in procuring him an education for the law—insomuch, that when her son had arrived at the age of discretion, she was so poor as to be obliged to seek charity at the hands of Tryphon, one of the masters of the synagogue. The rabbin was so satisfied with his zeal and his acquirements, that, on dying, he bequeathed to him his daughter and his fortune. Epiphanius was living quietly, attending the public schools and oratories of

* Labbe Magn. Collect. concil. t. i.

† This custom of blessing the harvest, and particularly the apricots, peaches, and almonds, still exists in Spain. (*Orden de las Oraciones Nassana Raba*, p. 473.)

‡ Labbe Concilia, t. i.

* See the title of the Theodosian code *de Judæis et Cælicolis*, where the laws of Constantine are reported: the devout faith of Theodosius has sometimes mutilated them. There are frequent interpolations in the Justinian code.

† Aboulpharg. Dynast. 7, p. 85.

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Israel, when he chanced to hear of a monk named Lucius, who lived in the desert, and whose ardent faith had procured for him the gift of performing miracles.

Epiphanius visited this solitary with pleasure, and found him surrounded by the poor and infirm. 'One day,' he says, 'when the cenobite had parted with everything, even to his last wretched garment, he was miraculously clothed with a mantle from heaven; and my soul, which had hitherto persevered in darkness, at length expanded to the gospel-light.' Lucius introduced the Israelite and his young sister, who shared his zeal, to the bishop, by whom they were admitted among the number of catechumens. Epiphanius afterwards travelled in Egypt, where at first he was led away by the Valentinian errors; but he soon rejected the brilliant conceptions of the gnostics, of which he has written an account, and was at last raised by the emperor to the bishopric of Constantinople.*

Joseph, whom, as we have already said, the same prince advanced to the dignity of count, had begun by exercising in the synagogue the functions of apostle, or preacher of the law of Moses, under the patriarch Hillel, who before his death had been suspected of Christianity. Having been appointed tutor of his successor, Judah, who was too young to perform the duties of the patriarchate, at that time hereditary, he had acquired the government of the synagogue of Tiberias. Common report had designated the late patriarch as the richest Jew in the city.† Joseph hastened to inspect the spot where it was said his brilliant treasures were concealed; but what was his astonishment when, in place of heaps of gold piled up, he only found the gospels of St. Matthew and St. John, and the Acts of the Apostles, in Hebrew! While Joseph perused with a secret but absorbing interest these books of Christianity, the patriarch Judah, his ward, as soon as he verged towards his twentieth year, gave himself up, to the great scandal of Israel, to all the licence and excesses of debauch. This spectacle, together with certain miracles which the biographer of Joseph takes care to relate, inspired the follower of the synagogue with a still stronger inclination towards the gospel. He was at no pains to conceal his preference; and in a town of Cilicia, where he was sent to collect the didrachma, and to reform the organisation of some schools, he became an object of jealous superintendence to the rabbins. His brethren at length surprised him reading the acts of the apostle Paul, and this symptom of apostasy filled them with such indignation, that they dragged him into the midst of the synagogue, and delivered him over to the lash of the Pharisees. This circumstance determined him at once to get baptized. Constantine welcomed him to his court, and honoured him with his confidence. According to the testimony of Epiphanius, the only privilege which the new convert demanded was the pious commission of visiting Judea, for the purpose of building churches in honour of Christ, particularly at Tiberias, Diocæsarea, Sephoris, and Capernaum, Jewish cities in Palestine in which the Christian religion had neither priests nor altars. Joseph went first to Tiberias, where he caused a temple, built of square blocks of marble, and which the emperor Adrian had consecrated to the '*unknown God*,' to be pulled down. The Jews were using it for public baths; Joseph determined to turn it into a church, dedicated to the apostles. The workmen had already collected the stones, and prepared the lime and mortar, when the populace, at the instigation of the rabbins, rose *en masse* to obstruct the efforts of the apostate. The historian to whom we are indebted for these facts has entered into a long account of the difficulties which Joseph had to encounter in the course of his mission, and confesses, with grief, that the new count had only succeeded, during his long stay in Palestine, in erecting a few Christian churches at Scythopolis and Diocæsarea.*

We have related these events, because they may help to make us acquainted with the respective situation of the Jews and Christians during the early period of the government of Constantine. The laws of this prince are distinguished by a great spirit of moderation. Some legionaries had entered by force into the synagogues; a rescript of the emperor forced them to go out, because it was unbecoming to disturb temples and oratories on feast days. The officers of the palace once wished to constrain the Israelites to personal services, and to appear before the prefect or the tribunal of justice, during the ceremonies of the sabbath; the emperor reminds them of the privileges granted to the synagogue by Severus, and orders that the Israelites shall on no account be cited to appear anywhere during their religious feasts, or even on their sabbath day.† At the same time, like the other citizens, they are subjected to all the charges of the curiæ. 'In the municipal towns, they will be called upon to bear their part in the burthens and obligations of the public administration; for the Jews cannot expect, that what is the peculiar privilege of the higher functionaries of the state, *can be accorded to their obstinate adherence to their faith*;'‡ their respectable patriarchs only shall be exempt, since their office is sufficiently high to be included in the exception.§ The Christians must neither annoy nor persecute the Jews, whose religion is tolerated in the empire; the latter may even keep Catholic slaves, provided they do not on any account subject them to circumcision and the Jewish rites.'‖

* Epiphan. de vitâ suâ.
† Id. Hæres. 30, No. 5.

* Epiphan. Hæres. 30, No. 5.
† Cod. Theodos. tit. viii. de Judæis et Cælicolis.
‡ Ibid. leg 3.
§ Ibid. leg. 4.
‖ Ibid. tit. ix. Cod. ne christ. mancip. Jud. habeat.

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As the government of Constantine acquired strength, its policy with regard to those religions which still resisted the imperious ascendant of the faith of Jesus Christ became more marked and decided. Twenty-two years had scarcely elapsed since the famous edict of Milan, which gave liberty to the church, when Constantine boldly celebrated the vicennial fêtes of his accession to the empire in the churches of the Christians, to the great scandal of the priests of paganism and the old Romans. A new capital had arisen under a new administration; and Constantine felt assured that the Christians, out of gratitude, would support his authority, which even yet was disputed, whereas the followers of the ancient superstitions regarded it with a secret jealousy, and might in the end conspire to overthrow it. From this moment he contemplated the destruction of the crumbling edifice of polytheism, but which was not to be despised even in its decay. By his orders, the officers of the palace visited the provinces; and while the merciless axe respected neither the temples of the gods nor the sacred woods—while Antioch bewailed the voluptuous groves of Daphne, and Egypt the majestic colossus of Isis, most of the synagogues of Alexandria, of Rome, and of Carthage, were given up to the fanatical zeal of Christians, who, inflamed by the passionate exhortations of their bishops, tore down the walls of oratories and synagogues which had long beheld the prayers and ceremonies of Israel.*

A curious letter of Eutropia, the mother of the empress Fausta, is extant, in which this pious Christian denounces to St. Macarius and the bishops of Syria, the unholy ceremonies and sacrilegious profanation of the Jews, which she had lately witnessed. Devotion had taken her to Palestine; at about two hundred and fifty furlongs from Jerusalem she had stopped near Teribinthus, in the valley of Mamre, the venerable spot where Abraham had entertained the three angels sent by Jehovah.† By the side of the old well where the patriarch watered his flocks, the oratories of the Israelites and the little temples built by the Gentiles in honour of favourable divinities, had risen promiscuously. That which had more particularly astonished the pious Eutropia was the strange scene which the valley of Mamre or Teribinthus presented. An annual market was held there, and a general feast observed, which was open to all comers;—the Jewish merchant and the Arab of the desert alighted there from their camels to venerate the land of Abraham, while the Gentiles poured out libations of wine, and offered up oxen crowned with garlands, the cock and the he-goat, symbols of impurity. The crowd and the confusion were so great, that the Christians complained they could not perform their prescribed ablutions—so noisome were the waters of Abraham's well, from the odour of the Gentiles, and the meal cakes which the rabbins and pontiffs threw into the waters to purify them.*

Nearly about the same time Helen visited Palestine, where the sight of so many revered spots, and of that nation formerly so powerful and now scattered abroad, rekindled her zeal and inflamed her devotion; every oratory, and every point of her pilgrimage, recalled to her the great events of sacred history, and the remembrance of the ingratitude of the Israelites. She ascended the mount Gherazim, where the Samaritans pretend that Abraham went forth to sacrifice his son. At the well of Sichem Jesus Christ had asked for water from the Samaritan woman; the neighbouring fountain, shaded with plantains, was that in which Jacob bathed with his flocks; and an almond tree, planted with the patriarch's own hands, recorded his prophetic dream of the continuance of his posterity. In Jerusalem, Helen admired, by turns, the remains of the palace of Solomon, the modest abode of Hezekiah, the fountain of Siloh, Mount Golgotha, where Jesus had been crucified, and the tombstone which had been laid over the place where he lay. Wholly absorbed in these painful recollections, Helen wished, by a durable monument, to commemorate the blindness of the Jews. On the very spot where they had overwhelmed the Nazarene with such accumulated outrages, a costly church was erected; that cross which the rabbins and doctors looked upon as the eternal witness of an impostor's ignominy, carefully sought out and protected, became a precious relic; and the new master of the Roman world disdained not to adorn the eagle of the Cæsars with the nails which had been used to crucify the Redeemer.†

All these ideas must have tended to exclude from the legislation those principles of wisdom and moderation which had distinguished the first acts of the reign of Constantine; and accordingly, the laws of Constantius, his successor, are impregnated with the increasing effervescence of religious opinions. In the Theodosian code there are but three rescripts of this prince relating to the Jews, but they evince a complete change in the spirit of legislation; the earliest ratifies for the first time, that decree of the councils which prohibits a Christian from marrying a Jewess.‡ Constantius considers these unions as criminal, and deprives them of all the privileges of legitimacy. Another law deprives the Israelites of the power of acquiring or possessing Catholic slaves: confounding civil ordinances with religious prejudices, the legislator declares that he cannot tolerate the authority of a master in those whom the oracles of religion condemn to servitude; if a slave has been circumcised by his master, he obtains his freedom, and the master

* Euseb. de vitâ Constantin. lib. iii.

† Genesis xviii.

* Sozomen. i. chap. 4.

† Euseb. de vitâ Constantin. lib. iii. ch. xxv. 47, 51, 55.

‡ Cod. Theodos. tit. viii. De Judæis et Cœlicolis.

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is punished with death. To conclude, Constantius visits with confiscation the freeman who deserts the altars of Christ to go and pray in the synagogue; moreover, the apostate is to be deprived of the power of making a will, or disposing of his goods by a last bequest.*

Under the blows received by these severe laws, the Jews endeavoured to create a rising in various parts of Palestine.† While the Roman legions resisted in the west the armies of Magnentius, Diocœsarea became the seat of a vast conspiracy, which had for its object to open the territory of the empire to Sapor, and to favour the invasion of the Persians. The long resistance of Nirbia thwarted the accomplishment of this criminal design. Diocœsarea was destroyed by Cæsar Gallus, and, according to St. Hillary, Constantius renewed against the Jews that law of the Emperor Adrian which interdicted them from approaching the walls of Jerusalem.‡

If one can judge of an age by its contemporary writings, it will not be supererogatory to remark, that the reign of Constantius is filled with the violent declamations of the Christian church against the synagogue; the bishops and priests momentarily abandoned the vain dispute of Arianism, but to inveigh against the obstinacy and ingratitude of the Jews. Amongst these records, which time has respected, there is one of a singular nature, which describes the state of men's minds and opinions; it is a dialogue between ten Christian virgins on matters of faith and morality; while Marcella, one of the pious spouses of Jesus Christ, extols the virtues and delights of chastity, and Theophila, on the contrary, considers the marriage state as a remedy provided for human frailty, Mecles, the eldest, declaims against the Jews, their hardened wickedness, and the persecutions which, through them, the Christian church has experienced. Throughout the slightly Oriental style of this dialogue one finds again the reasonings and objections which the Catholics at every epoch have brought forward against the incorrigible Israelites.§

On the death of Constantius, a remarkable epoch commences for the synagogue. The successor of this prince, the Emperor Julian, had no personal predilection for the Jewish religion; wholly occupied with the revival of paganism, and with the care of embellishing its temples and multiplying its sacrifices, the philosophical prince hardly cared to throw even a curious glance at the Jewish antiquities. In his work against Christianity, of which St. Cyril has preserved to us some fragments, Julian, in imitation of Celsus and Porphyry, sets himself against the Holy Scriptures; he attacks, with a subtle dialectic, the entire composition of Genesis, and treats it as a meagre and imperfect sketch of the mysterious songs of Orpheus upon chaos. In that vast collection of the laws and ceremonial tradition, arranged by Moses, the Cæsar only finds the practice of circumcision worthy of approbation, because it had been borrowed from Egypt, and the secret sacrifices of the Cribolus and Taurobolus.* In a letter addressed to the inhabitants of Alexandria, Julian engages the citizens of a town which Serapis deigned to visit, to shun the superstition of the Hebrews, that exiled race which the Egyptians held a long time in slavery, and to remember that the great Jupiter opens for the Alexandrians the beneficent sources of the Nile, whereas Jehovah had commanded the Hebrews to despoil Egypt. Julian, then, in fact, had but a very slight esteem for the religion and worship of Moses; but that which urged him to gather together the scattered wrecks of the Synagogue, was the profound hatred he bore towards Christianity, and a passionate desire to raise up every possible testimony against the gospel preaching. The Nazarene had foretold the destruction of Jerusalem, and the fathers of the church continually cited the dispersion of the Jews as a living proof of the divine mission of Christ. Julian, who had been nurtured, during his infancy, in the study of the Scriptures in the churches of Constantinople, had fully estimated of what immense importance it would be for the triumph of Paganism to destroy this argument so solemnly adduced by the Christians, and by rebuilding Jerusalem, and re-establishing her altars and her priesthood, to strike a mortal blow at the rival religion. The same malicious policy which induced him to recall the Donatists from exile and to substitute the eagle of Jupiter, and the images of the Capitol, for the sacred labarum, determined him also to collect the dispersed members of the Jewish commonwealth, in order that he might make a powerful weapon of such an event in his philosophical discussions.

Amongst the works of Julian, time has spared an epistle which he addresses to the community of the Jews, about the same time that he dictated to the sophist Libanius the famous Misopagon, against the inhabitants of Antioch.

'The late reign was hard upon you, not so much on account of your servitude, as because you were exposed to exactions which were levied on you without any order from the emperor. I myself have witnessed these exactions, and I have burnt the ordinances which they were keeping to oppress you; do not impute your grievances to Constantius, but to the profane babblers who eat at his table. I have seized some of them with my own hands, and flung them into a ditch, so that not a vestige of them may be left amongst you. As I wish to confer the greatest benefits upon you of which I am capable, I have desired your patriarch, Hillel

* Cod. Theodos. ibid. i. 7.

† Sozomen. lib. ii. ch. ix. p. 455.

‡ St. Hila. in Ps. lviii. p. 731—734.

§ Fleming reproduces it entire, with his habitual erudition and simplicity.

* Fabricius, Bibl. Græca, lib. v. p. 44, and Dr. Lardner's 'Heathen Testimonies,' tom. iv. p. 44, have gathered together all that remains of Julian's work against Christianity.

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not to exact the tributes, so that, living in peace, you may offer up prayers for the prosperity of my reign to that great God whose holy hands have placed the crown upon my head. The chief object of your desire should be, that I may be enabled, after gloriously terminating the Persian war, to re-build the holy city of Jerusalem, which you have so long yearned to dwell in once more, and there along with you return thanks to the great God for all his various and bountiful mercies."*

At the epoch when Julian thus awakened the hopes of Israel, the synagogue was rejoicing in the expectation that 'the time was come when God would avenge his people, and raise up Sion from her captivity.' According to the promises of the rabbins, the Israelites were destined, four hundred and eighty years after the dispersion, to reign over the Roman empire, and to sell its inhabitants to the Sabians; and while Jerusalem, shining with renewed splendour lifted up her head above the nations, the liberating Messiah was to subdue kingdoms, and put the princes of the earth under his feet.† These expectations, already exercising of themselves so powerful an influence over the minds of the superstitious Israelites, were greatly strengthened by the promises of Julian. They could not refrain from expressing their feelings in the most boisterous acclamations, and with characteristic impetuosity they at once proceeded to profane several of the Christian temples. They assembled tumultuously in several towns of Syria, and overthrew the rising churches of Gaza and Ascalon. More than fifty years after this sedition, St. Ambrose still deplores the outrages of the Jews on the basilicks of Damascus during 'the ephemeral reign of the apostate.'‡

While Julian was at Antioch, making preparations for his Persian campaign, some of the chiefs of the synagogue and elders of the Sanhedrim came to offer him the grateful acknowledgments of their fraternity. In the midst of the occupations of war, and the pursuit of philosophy, Julian disdained not to converse with the masters and rabbins; and the prince who unscrupulously levelled the cathedrals of the Christians at Antioch, complained to the Jewish pontiffs of their negligence in the performance of sanctification and prayer. 'Why have you left off your sacrifices,' he said, 'just at the moment when the aid of Heaven is so especially necessary for me?' Upon which the deputies ventured to remind him, with mournful accents, that the temple was destroyed, and that the sacred law of Israel prohibited the sacrifice, except in that sanctuary. 'Well, then, read your prophets, and you will see that your misfortunes are to cease in my reign, that the temple of Solomon is to rise from its ruins, and that thousands of oxen are to be sacrificed amidst the songs of your Levites, as in the days of your great king!'

The impatient resolution of Julian could not await the conclusion of the Persian war, to commence this pious undertaking; an imperial rescript ordained that the sanctuary of the Jews should be built up opposite to the church of the Resurrection, and that a colony of Israelites, restored to Jerusalem with all their rights and privileges, should henceforth give laws to the Christians or Nazarenes.

In one of his letters, Julian charges his friend Alypius to look to the execution of his orders; he wishes him, if it is necessary, even to suspend the duties of the empire, or at all events to abandon for a short time the delightful commerce of philosophy and the muses, in order to restore to an ancient people the pomp of their ceremonies, and thus to increase the sacrifices offered up to the immortal gods.*

The Christians heard with dismay the orders of Julian. Should the project of the emperor succeed without opposition, Christianity was struck at its basis. 'What a victim! what a holocaust he promised to his gods!' cries Gregory of Nazianze; 'you yourself, O Christ! and all the faithful in Assyria, would have been bowed down beneath the demon's empire.'† 'A strong faith was indeed necessary,' adds St. John Chrysostom, 'to prevent one's being carried away by the common apprehensions.'‡ And thus, naught but tears and lamentations were heard in the assemblies of the believers, and the priests and bishops could hardly sustain the timid doubts and wavering faith of the Christians.

The Jews, on the contrary, thought they had received an order from the Lord himself. The glorious news of their approaching restoration spread from east to west; thousands of men, women, and children, clothed in festive garments, congregated round the holy city: and no sooner had Alypius publicly announced the solemn decree of the prince, than the works were begun. 'Vast heaps of materials,' says St. Gregory, 'towered up like mountains; the site of the temple was cleared of its ashes. You might have seen the Israelites lavishing their wealth and their labours upon the ruins of that temple yet smitten with the curse of heaven; some broke up and removed the earth with spades and pickaxes of silver, others carried in costly baskets the mortar and the square stones which were to serve for the porches and cloisters; women and children, attired in lawn and silk, were covered with ashes and dust; while all joined aloud in psalms of thanksgiving unto the Lord, who had brought them up out of the land of Egypt and of Babylon, and who had now once more re-

* Julian so calls Him: but he does not consider him to be the only God. Epist. Fragm. 295.
† S. Hieron. in Psalm.
‡ S. Ambrose, lib. v. Epist. xxix. p. 154.

* Julian, Epistol. xxix.
† St. Greg. Nazianz. Orat. iv.
‡ St. John Chrysostom. Orat. adversus Judæos, t. i. p. 580, t. ii. p. 574.

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deemed them from a heavier captivity. But the Lord accomplished his ends. The Jews insulted our Christ, and the friends of the Apostate asked in derision, 'Where was now the Galilean?'

Nevertheless, on the evening of this busy day a sudden tempest of wind arose and overthrew with a crash the stones and mortar; the foundations so laboriously excavated were presently choked up with rubbish; a tremendous earthquake heaved on every side; thousands of the Jews were crushed by the falling in of a large cloister, to which they had fled for refuge, while others, rushing to the church, were pursued by the devouring flames. Amidst the flashing of lightnings and the pealing of thunders, fiery bolts were poured forth from the blazing heavens, dealing death, burning stones to ashes, and melting the implements of iron and silver scattered all around. What a spectacle did that awful field present, with its hideous mass of crumbling walls and blackened corpses! Yet the Israelites, undaunted by these appalling obstacles, returned to their operations, and the next morning beheld them again preparing for the labours of the day. And again the earth heaved with redoubled shocks; in vain they endeavoured to plant the blocks of the foundation; the ground yawned beneath their feet, and sulphureous balls of fire, shooting forth from the chasms, shivered the stones to pieces. As often as the hand of man essayed to erect his puny works, so often, adds Gregory, the hand of God destroyed them, thus fulfilling the words of the Scripture, 'I will prevent the foolish designs of the wicked, and my hand shall destroy his works.'*

To this extraordinary description of a contemporary, 'a description,' says Gibbon, 'which should satisfy a believing, and must astonish an incredulous mind,'† St. Cyril, bishop of Jerusalem, adds various prodigies. On the second night of this phenomenon when amidst the storm of the elements the heaven and earth seemed to come together, a resplendent cross stood revealed in the sky encircled by a thousand rays. On the morrow the Jews found their garments stamped with the miraculous sign, and many in Jerusalem thereupon were converted and believed.‡

The fathers of the church, in relating this event, not only appeal to the contemporaneous testimony of the Christian church, but also to that of the Gentiles. St. Gregory of Nazianzen, who wrote an account of it in the very year in which it happened, strenuously asserts that the most inveterate pagans did not dispute the occurrence of the prodigy, and that they attributed it to physical causes, or the power of demons. However strange this assertion may appear, it is nevertheless confirmed by the statement of Ammianus Marcellinus. This philosophic historian, a zealous, but at the same time impartial defender of the institutions and doctrines of paganism, has recorded in his history the obstacles which presented themselves to the rebuilding of the temple of Jerusalem. 'Whilst Alypius, assisted by the governor of the province, urged with vigour and diligence the execution of the work, horrible balls of fire breaking out near the foundations, with frequent and reiterated attacks, rendered the place from time to time inaccessible to the scorched and blasted workmen: and the victorious element continuing in this manner obstinately and resolutely bent, as it were, to drive them to a distance, the undertaking was abandoned.* In one of his letters to the philosopher Libanius, Julian himself avows that he had been anxious to rebuild the temple of Jerusalem; and retracing the history of that ancient building, he reminds him how it had been three times destroyed since the death of its first founder, which would not have been correct unless he had included, as the third destruction, the one which happened in his reign.

This was far too important an event in the history of the synagogne for the rabbins to keep silence upon it. 'Julian,' says the annalist David Ganz, 'issued an ordinance for the rebuilding of the holy edifice of the temple, and supplied all the requisite expenses out of his treasury; but the prevention came from heaven, for Cæsar was wounded in the Persian war.†

'In the time of king Chanan,' adds Gedaliah, in his *Chain of Traditions*, 'about the year 4349, the books of the annals relate that a general stir prevailed throughout the universe. As the temple had fallen, the Jews endeavoured to rebuild it, by order of the Emperor Julian; but flames came down from heaven, and a great many Jews were burnt to death.'‡

We have impartially adduced all these various testimonies, which we submit to a judicious criticism. If the piety of the Christian can adore therein the manifestations of a secret Providence consummating its judgments upon a proscribed race, the philosopher can only recognize in them one of those terrible phenomena which are common to the East, and which about the same period actually destroyed many flourishing cities in Asia Minor. At all events, however viewed by the historian, it will be enough to say, that with the reign of Julian vanished once more all the hopes of the children of Israel. His successor, Jovian, re-established the faith of the Messiah, and the cross of Jesus Christ again glittered by the imperial

* S. Gregor. Nazianz. ibid.

† Gibbon is, of all historians, the one who has given the best and most impartial account of the different relations which have been transmitted to us of this phenomenon.

‡ S. Cyril. Epist. xxiv.

* Amm. Marcell. xxiii. chap. v. Cum rei fortiter incitaret Alypius, juvaretque provinciæ rector, metuendi globi flammarum, prope fundamenta crebris assultibus erumpentes, fecere locum exurtis aliquoties operantibus inaccessum, hocque modo elemento destinatius repellente, cessavit inceptum.

† Ganz. Isemach, p. 2.

‡ Schalschelet Hakabala, ad ann. 4949.

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eagle. The short administration of this prince did not allow his zeal for the Catholic faith to display itself otherwise than by the restoration of the churches thrown down during the reign of Julian. Valens and Valentinian, associated in the empire, held but an uncertain belief in the real dogmas of Christianity. Valentinian adopted the Nicene creed; Valens inclined to Arianism; and the disputes between these two sects absorbed the attention of these royal theologians. Valens, strenuous defender of the tenets of Arius, allowed himself to be hurried away into all the extremes of persecution against the orthodox, and the triumphant refutation of rival opinion occupied his mind infinitely more than the extinction of paganism and the suppression of Judaism. 'While the Emperor Valens persecuted the Catholics,' says an historian of the church,* 'he left the Jews, and even the pagans, the free and unmolested exercise of their religion, and they were quietly suffered to observe those profane ceremonies which Julian had restored, and which Jovian had not time to abolish.' In fact, during the reign of Valens the synagogue could peaceably address their vows and adorations to the God of Israel.

Idacius carefully records in his Fasti, that the feasts of Jupiter and of Ceres were celebrated with great pomp and rejoicings, and that both at Antioch and Alexandria the Jews mixed with the pagans in the sacred orgies of Bacchus. Under the reign of a Christian emperor, men clothed in tigers' skins were seen dancing through various populous cities of Asia, and celebrating the son of Semele, whom some mystic philosophers under Julian mistook for Moses and Joshua.† ‹

Notwithstanding, there exist in the code of Justinian many laws inscribed with the name of Valens and Valentinian, and after him of Gratian, which display the spirit of their legislation, sometimes impartial, but often vexatious, with regard to the synagogue. 'The Jews,' says the Emperor Valens, 'flatter themselves that they shall be exempt from filling municipal offices, but do they not know that no one, not even those who devote themselves to the service of the church, can be allowed to dispense with contributing their share in bearing the public burdens?'‡

A PASSAGE IN THE LIFE OF ALFIERI.

BY J. C. C.

Two men who had sought for protection from the rays of the sun in an arbour which was overshadowed by the thick leaves of a wide-spreading vine, were seated opposite to each other, leaning on a table, and smoking perfumed cigarettos.

The elder, who appeared to be about forty years of age, was tall and pale; his costume, which was rich although simple, had somewhat of a military appearance about it. As for the younger, he was characterized by that slovenly elegance which had begun to be fashionable in Italy as well as in France, towards the end of the eighteenth century.

'Faith, Alfieri,' said the elder of the two, 'you were the last person in the world I expected to have met at Abano.'

'Yet, methinks, the sick man's place should be where he may hope to mend his health.'

The young man looked at the count: 'The fact is, you do look paler than usual; have you consulted the best physicians?'

'Yes.'

'And what do they say?'

'The same thing over and over again. They promise me in the winter that I shall be well in the summer; and when the summer comes and I feel no relief, they assure me that I shall be better in the winter. The Milanese doctors recommend the air of Naples, and the Neapolitan doctors that of Milan; and so they go on, turning me over from one to the other, until I expect some day to die on the road between these two places, if I continue to follow their ordinances.'

'Come, come, nonsense, did you ever hear of anybody dying at your age?'

'Sometimes,' murmured Alfieri pensively, and shaking his head.

'I bet I know what ails you: you have eternally present to your mind the prediction of your old sorceress.'

'Am I wrong, Cellini? I was only twelve years of age when that old woman told me all that has happened to me since. She said that I should leave Piedmont, that I should become a poet, and that my name would be celebrated.'

'And that you would die at thirty-five. Who doesn't know that part of your history? You have written on it an admirable sonnet which all Italy knows by heart. But that a man like you should put faith in the mummery of an old woman, is what I cannot understand.'

The count sighed, but made no answer: a short silence ensued.

'Shall I tell you what it is that kills you?' rejoined Cellini. 'At the bottom you are not ill, you are only low-spirited.'

'That's what the doctors say,' replied the count sadly, 'but I feel it will carry me off at last.'

'Why not seek for some distractions? Why don't you travel? When you quitted Milan, your intention, if I mistake not, was to go to Spain.'

'I have been there.'

'Ah! indeed—and from thence to France.'

'I have been there.'

'And thence to Germany.'

'I have been there.'

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* Theodoret, chap. iv. Hist. xiv.

† Idacius, Fast. 21.

‡ Cod. Justin. de Judæis et Cœlicolis.

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'But you must have been every where, if that's the case. The fact is, I know you are a most expeditious traveller; you traverse each country as fast as your horse can gallop; but you can't have had time to see anything.'

'Pardon me; I have seen mountains, cities, roads, and plains; and in the midst of all this, numberless myriads of human beings very busy doing nothing.'

'And what did you particularly notice?'

'Three splendid institutions: the *schlague* in Germany, the *police* in France, and the *inquisition* in Spain.'

'You're as full of satire as ever, I see,' said Cellini laughing; 'a misanthropist and a republican, a real descendant of Brutus in the papal states. But really, Alfieri, you do not deserve the favours which fortune has bestowed upon you; all our theatres ring with your triumphs. Italy has its eyes upon you; you are noble, rich, young, and yet you seem tired of life. What is it you would have to be happy?'

'That is more than I can say; something perhaps which is possessed by the lowliest of the crowd which covers me with acclamations; a quiet and retired habitation, an obscure destiny, and a woman who would love me, seated by my side.'

'But what hinders you from having all this?'

Alfieri shrugged up his shoulders, and heaved a deep sigh. 'You forget,' said he, 'that chance has made a *celebrated* man of me, and a celebrated man is like a wild beast, everybody rushes to get a sight of him. Every man thinks he has a right to spy into my actions; I am never alone; my books are like couriers, they announce my arrival wherever I go. As soon as I appear in an assembly, farewell to free and friendly conversation; universal silence prevails, the guests are all on the tip-toe of expectation; they expect to hear me speak as if I were a book. The women are all silent through fear, or else they give themselves airs to attract my notice. Brought up, as I was, almost in the midst of woods, secluded from society in my youth, I feel confused at being singled out as the object of universal attention; unable to distinguish between real sympathy and impertinent curiosity, I wrap myself up in my reserve, and remain silent. I am therefore considered proud, when I am only unhappy. Ah! were I poor, destitute, miserable, I might believe in the affection of those who surround me; but I am now ever in doubt whether it is myself or my reputation which is sought after.'

'I understand—you are as unfortunate as a king.'

'You seem to jest, but it is strictly true nevertheless. When I arrived here, I thought I had escaped from all my troubles; for a few days I was free to live like everybody else, I was comparatively happy—but the arrival of a man, who had seen me I don't know where, destroyed everything.'

'That's the way of the world,' said Cellini—'your celebrity is a burden to you, and I, who work my fingers off, remain buried in the most enviable obscurity.'

'It is your own fault; you don't stick to anything seriously.'

'My dear count, you seem to forget that I am in the pay of an *impressario*, obliged to have three acts ready every month. You don't know what it is to be a composer to a theatre; it's like the landlord of a public-house where there is a continued call on his genius.'

'Until he at last gets to the bottom of it.'

'That's just what has happened to me; I managed to live some time on about a dozen decent ideas—you know what an idea is, a thing you can dish up with fifty different sauces; you can put the beginning at the end, the middle at the beginning, and people wonder at the author's fecundity. I went on in this manner for about three years; but at last the public discovered that I gave them turned cloth for new—I was hissed.'

'Well and how did you manage then?'

'Why I determined to travel and regenerate my ideas.'

'And do think you shall succeed?'

'Quite certain of it. There are a great many persons at Abano, and plots are as thick here as the grasshoppers were in Egypt in the time of Pharaoh. In less than a month, I warrant you that I shall have gathered materials enough for as many comedies and dramas as will last me ten years at a moderate calculation. I only arrived yesterday, and am already on the scent of an intrigue.'

Alfieri smiled incredulously.

''Tis a fact,' continued Cellini, lowering his voice; 'yesterday, heated by travelling and unable to sleep, I ventured into the garden; you know the small pavilion at the extremity of the gravel walk.'

'Yes.'

'Well, I was strolling about near it, when I heard a door or a window suddenly close. I turned about, and found myself cheek by jowl with a man.'

'Can it be possible?'

'Seeing me, he stopped short and seemed inclined to speak, but he altered his mind, turned away, and disappeared.'

'Did you distinguish his features?'

'As I do yours now—it was splendid moonlight.'

'And you would recognize him again?'

'I have done so already.'

'How?'

'This morning I saw him in the pump-room.'

'Do you know his name?'

'They call him Marliano.'

The count started up with vivacity. 'Are you sure he came out of the pavilion?'

'I couldn't swear to it, but I think he did.'

'And you are sure that it was close to the pavilion at the bottom of the garden, near the poplar trees, that you met him?'

'Yes, under the windows of the Marchioness Alcanza.'

Alfieri turned pale, his lips trembled con-

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vulsively, but he mastered his emotion and sat down again.

'You see that I haven't lost my time,' continued Cellini, who had not remarked the count's uneasiness. 'I am on the scent of a love affair, which will no doubt furnish me with some excellent scenes. I had already remarked this Marliano, on account of his being so very ugly; he looks like the impenitent thief, in my idea. Seeing him continually in the company of the marchioness, who, by-the-bye, appears to hate him, I at first took him for her husband, but I was mistaken; there is a secret about it, which you must help me to penetrate.'

It was indeed a secret; but it was not only now that the count desired to discover it. Cellini was far from being aware how interested his friend was in this mystery, and what anguish his recital had inflicted upon him.

The marchioness had been about three months at Abano. She had come alone, and was ill. Alfieri had done his best to avoid her; indeed he let slip no opportunity of showing his aversion when chance threw them together; but the young widow did her utmost to overcome a hatred, the cause of which she really was, or affected to be, ignorant of. Subsequently the count's coldness had yielded to the marks of interest which he received from the marchioness, and a sort of intimacy, which became more familiar every day, sprang up between them. He felt that this woman exercised more influence over him every time he saw her; that his existence was, as it were, incomplete without her society; and that, in short, his happiness depended on the continuance of that friendship which had so unexpectedly arisen out of his former dislike.

He was on the point of telling her so one day, when Marliano arrived. At the sight of this man Bianca appeared confused; she welcomed him with concealed affright; there arose a sort of mute combat between them, in which the young widow was vanquished.

Alfieri then remarked that she avoided him. It seemed to him as if this Marliano exercised over her a sort of jealous guardianship, to which she submitted, but against her will. What connection could there exist between these two beings? Cellini's story cleared up all his doubts, but he could not bring himself to put faith in the conclusions which it seemed to warrant. Then who was this Marliano? A first glance seemed to indicate one of those men who pass their lives in the frivolities and dissipations of the world; but after a more minute examination he descried under this assumed mask a violent tenacity, a stubborn and headstrong will, one of those ignoble and coarse minds in a case of adamant. Alfieri had in vain endeavoured to study more deeply this man's character; all his advances were met with distant civility; indeed the marchioness always interfered to put an end to any discussion which might arise between them; she seemed to fear their coming in contact with each other.

Such was the state of things, when one day the count, on descending into the garden rather earlier than usual, met the young widow alone. It was the first time since the arrival of Marliano, and he resolved to profit by it. After several useless attempts to discourse on indifferent topics, finding that he became more and more embarrassed, he at last suddenly stopped, and taking the hand of the marchioness—

'What have you against me?' said he; 'and why do you avoid me?'

'I avoid you!' repeated she; 'what can induce you to think so?'

'Do you think I am blind, madam? For more than a fortnight this is the first time I have been able to speak to you.'

The marchioness, who had been troubled for a moment, had now recovered herself.

'Are you sure that it is my fault?' asked she, smiling; 'we seldom find those whom we do not care to seek.'

'Ah, madam! you do not doubt my desire to partake of your society?'

'Why not? I know that my arrival at Abano pleased you at first. Did the intimacy of a few days suffice to destroy all your former prejudices?'

The count blushed, and endeavoured to exculpate himself.

'Do not attempt to deny it,' continued the marchioness; 'some one had poisoned your mind against me. I know that the only reason of your stay was your being obliged to wait for some letters which you expected; you were consequently compelled to put up with my society.'

'I do not know who can have given you all these details,' said Alfieri, with unaffected simplicity, 'but I cannot deny my faults, or conceal my thoughts. It is true that your name awakened in me a painful emotion, and that I did not attempt to hide it. But if such be the cause of your coldness towards me, which has succeeded so suddenly to your prior affability, you punish too cruelly a prejudice which your presence has sufficed to dissipate.'

'And may I ask you what this prejudice might be?'

'Were I to refuse to give you the explanation you demand, you might be inclined to suppose that it arose from some injurious repugnance on my part; but your presence renewed a sensation of sorrow within my breast, of which I was not the master.'

'And for what reason?'

'I once had a friend, madam, who had likewise been the companion of my studies. We had grown together, and I loved him as children love one another, because they are of the same age and enjoy the same pleasures. We had separated, but kept up a regular correspondence, for we could not forget the happy days of our boyhood. I heard that he lived respected by all who knew him at Genoa. About a year back I learned that he had fallen in love with a woman, beautiful, admired, and courted by all. Two of my letters remained unanswer-

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ed; at last I received one from his mother—his love had been fatal to him.'

'And your friend was called?'

'Julio Aldi.'

On hearing this name, a cry escaped the marchioness.

'It was then that I heard your name pronounced for the first time,' continued Alfieri; but seeing that the young woman had buried her face in her hands—'Pardon me, madam,' said he, with a supplicating and agitated voice, 'I have afflicted you, but it was unavoidable. Now you are aware why I wished to avoid a person whose presence recalled to me the death of my friend.'

'How you must have hated me!' exclaimed the marchioness, bathed in tears.

'No, madam; for I knew that you did everything in your power to prevent their duel, that you even went to the place of rendezvous.'

'Too late, sir—too late!'

'The fault was not yours, and Aldi's mother rendered you full justice; she did not accuse you in the agony of her grief, but the young man's imprudence, which had exposed him to the Baron Rocca's sword. Ah, how often have I condemned him for having ventured, in the chances of a duel, a life full of hope in the future! I then did not know that jealousy can excite to anger. I then did not know the anguish of always finding near the person beloved a face whose impassibility insults our sufferings—of hearing, wherever her voice is heard, the voice of another who answers her with familiarity! Now I comprehend why Aldi preferred certain death to tortures such as these; for I, a man of thought and revery as I am, who never touched a sword in my life, I feel a thirst for shedding blood; a challenge is ever on my lips; and I wish to be placed opposite to my adversary sword in hand to acquire the right of loving exclusively to myself.'

Alfieri's voice had risen as he spoke, his pale face was flushed, and, on pronouncing these last words, his hand was outstretched as if he had grasped a sword; the marchioness made an involuntary motion to stop him.

'Ah! you need not fear,' rejoined he with a bitter smile; 'I have devoured my anger. What right had I to provoke a rival? Jealousy is only permitted to him who can hope for a return to his affection. And yet,' continued he, after a short pause, 'what risk should I run in a duel? Is there not a terrible one engaged between me and my malady? and I well know what will be the issue of that?'

The marchioness had insensibly drawn closer to him. Her looks were fixed on the poet's dejected countenance with an indescribable expression of compassion, and she said, in a voice trembling with emotion, 'Good heavens! what is the matter with you?'

'Do you ask me? Do you not know both the cause and the cure? Nothing but a little affection which might inspire me with the desire to live; for an instant I imagined I had found it; I then breathed more freely; I felt all the vigour of my first youth return, because I was happy; but it only lasted a few days, for I soon perceived that my hopes were groundless.'

'Who told you so?'

'Bianca!' exclaimed he; 'have I understood you? Speak, I beseech you—for pity's sake, speak!'

The marchioness was about to answer; but she suddenly uttered a cry of terror, and tore herself from his embrace. The count raised his eyes; Marliano was standing at the corner of the parterre.

The Genoese bowed coldly. On seeing him the marchioness had fallen back motionless on the bench; he advanced, and, without appearing to notice her emotion, inquired after her health with impassible politeness.

As for Alfieri, the arrival of this man at the moment that he was about to receive an avowal which he had so long and so ardently sought after, had at first drawn from him a gesture of anger; but his attention was soon attracted towards Bianca, who by her looks seemed to be supplicating Marliano. Alfieri felt all his doubts return; an invincible instinct pointed out this man to him as his rival, and he resolved to do his utmost to verify his suspicions. He observed to the marchioness that it was time to go to the spring, and he offered to escort her there.

'I thank you, sir,' said the marchioness, with embarrassment; 'I remain here, but do not let me interfere with your arrangements.'

'My arrangements are yours, madam,' said the count; 'you know it—the only hours that I enjoy are those which I pass with you.'

'I see, count, that you would succeed quite as well in madrigals as in tragedy,' replied the marchioness with effort.

Alfieri shook his head. 'Do not rail, I beseech you, at the expression of a sentiment which you know to be sincere,' said he; 'you cannot mistake the cause of the change which your presence has worked in me. Before I knew you I was unhappy, wearied with all that vain applause which is called glory. I saw you—melancholy, fatigue, all disappeared. You have acted on me like the rays of the sun on a drooping plant—I owe you my very existence.'

'Sir!' exclaimed the marchioness, terrified; and then she turned her eyes upon Marliano, but he remained calm and motionless.

Alfieri had watched her looks and her movements.

'You will excuse me,' rejoined he, turning towards the Genoese; 'such confessions are not usually made in the presence of a third person. I have doubtless been indiscreet.'

Marliano bowed. 'I feel happy,' said he,

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'count, to have inspired you with so much confidence as to induce you to make such an avowal of your sentiments.'

'I assure you, signor, that I rejoice that you hear me.'

'It is rather for me to rejoice to find that a great poet employs, to express his passion, an eloquence which others in vain seek for in their love.'

The irony with which these last words had been pronounced had something so cold, so piercing about it, that it produced on Alfieri the effect of those wounds which we do not feel at first; but when he understood the full force of it, a flush of indignation caused his very blood to boil: his eyes met those of Marliano. Bianca threw herself between these two glances, in which they exchanged their hatred.

'We well know your gallantry, count,' said she; 'but we have had quite enough on that chapter for to-day. I do not intend to go to the spring, but I do not wish to hinder you from taking your accustomed walk; you will bring me a nosegay on your return.'

The count made an effort on himself, and took his leave. Marliano was about to follow him.

'Signor Marliano!' exclaimed the marchioness, 'you promised to read me a chapter.'

The Genoese turned towards her, a sardonic smile played upon his lips. 'Are you so much afraid for him?' said he.

Bianca laid her hand on her heart, and sat down without being able to answer.

'Yet you have reason to be satisfied with me, madam,' rejoined Marliano bitterly. 'Did I not allow him to speak of his love? Did I not suffer his insults, for his intention was to insult me? Did I not carry my patience to such a pitch that he must have thought me a vile coward? Does not this suffice?'

'I must leave this place,' said the marchioness with anguish. 'I cannot stay here any longer. I shall return to Genoa.'

'I am ready.'

Bianca cast on Marliano a long look of terror and indignation.

'Yes,' continued she, 'I shall return to Genoa, but to bid an eternal adieu to the world. I have often thought of it—my determination is taken—I shall retire into a convent.'

Marliano started. 'What say you, madam? A convent!'

'I am resolved.'

'Impossible! So young, so beautiful—to bury yourself in an eternal prison.'

'Am I free now?'

The Genoese looked at her. 'It is to avoid me that you shun the world,' said he sorrowfully; 'you then hate me more than you love its pleasures.'

'And even were it so, have you not forced me to it?'

'What have I done?'

The Marchioness briskly raised her head. 'Do you dare ask me?' said she, with indignant surprise. 'Baron Rocca, have you forgotten the past? Have you not traced around me a fatal circle which none can pass without certain death? You ask me what you have done. Have you not profited by your odious address as a *bravo* to assume to yourself the authority of a guardian over me against my will, and call to account all those who have dared to approach me? I could not demand the assistance of those who would have had the courage to protect me against this tyranny, for it would have exposed them to certain destruction. Sheltered under the point of honour, you would have awaited their provocation—then, master of the arms and conditions, you would have murdered them as you did the unfortunate Aldi. Thus have you enslaved me to your will during three years, trembling beneath your regard, obliged to suffer your society, and estranging all others from me through fear. In vain have I tried to escape you; you have followed me everywhere. Even here, where I had fled for concealment, you appear under the false name of Marliano, as if you had feared that yours would have been the signal of my flight—and you ask me what you have done!'

Whilst the marchioness had been speaking, the Genoese had turned paler and paler; his features had assumed an expression impossible to describe; it was an anguish which had something cruel about it—a sort of despair which tormented him, but inspired no pity; it was the grief of Satan crowned king of evil and of pain.

'Why did you not love me?' said he, fixing on the marchioness a withering look of anger. 'It is you who have caused all that has happened. Happiness would have softened my soul. You have exasperated it. That skill which you reproach me with—the world itself forced me to acquire it. I was ugly, abandoned; I required a defence against contempt—I acquired the art of killing. What had at first been necessity, became at last a habit—I placed my honour in a science which I had studied merely as a safeguard. Besides, why should I spare those who hate me? The hatred of others renders us cruel, madam. Ah! as soon as I knew you, I take heaven to witness that I repented ever having shed blood—but I could not efface the past. My love was disdained. I saw you despised and hated me. I was then seized with a secret rage. Why should I leave to another the happiness which had been refused to myself? Would you even have thanked me for it at the bottom of your soul? No! If I am cruel, Bianca, it is because I cannot bear the idea that you should love another.'

'Thus I am the slave of your passion.'

'I love you, and am jealous.'

'But I—I do not love you.'

'I know—I know it. And yet your love would change my whole life, and redeem the past.'

He seized the hands of Bianca, and pressed them convulsively against his heart. 'Oh! I love you, Bianca; I love you as man never loved,' exclaimed he; 'why are you without pity?'

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'Leave—leave me,' said the young woman, struggling to escape.

'What can I do to induce you to listen to me?'

'Leave me, I say.'

'Bianca, you cannot eternally resist my prayers—you will relent—I love you too much—you must be mine at last.'

'A convent rather!' exclaimed the young woman, distracted.

'I will tear you from it.'

'Then the tomb!'

Marliano let drop her hands, which he had held in his. 'You love the count,' said he, gnashing his teeth with rage.

The marchioness shuddered, attempted to speak, but burst into tears.

'To-morrow we will start for Genoa,' said he, after a long silence.

At this moment some persons appeared at the extremity of the walk; Marliano offered the countess his arm, and they both walked away.

Hardly had they disappeared amongst the trees, when Cellini crept cautiously from behind a clump of acacias where he had concealed himself. He had arrived there a little after Alfieri's departure, and having distinguished the voices of the marchioness and Marliano, he had allowed his curiosity to get the better of his discretion. Wishing to clear up the suspicions which he entertained, he had listened attentively, and had heard all that had passed between them. The beginning of their conversation had only excited his astonishment, and he merely saw in it a capital subject for a *scenario*, but the end had taught him the part which Alfieri had played in the affair. He therefore ran to him immediately, and told him all that he had discovered thus opportunely. His revelation was for the count as welcome as it was unexpected; his doubts were removed, and he saw that he was beloved. Everything was now explained; the trouble of the marchioness at the sight of Marliano; her timid submission to his will; the sudden alteration in her behaviour towards himself. His joy knew no bounds.

'But,' observed Cellini, 'she has promised this Marliano, or rather this Baron Rocca, to start to-morrow.'

'No, no,' exclaimed Alfieri; 'she shall stay. Ah! heaven be thanked that I have learned the truth; for this once this Baron Rocca will find some one betwixt him and the woman whom he oppresses.'

'You forget that you never handled an arm in your life, and that this man will infallibly kill you.'

'I do not care.'

'Of course you are too happy just now to care about life; only, if you succumb, the marchioness will remain without a protector, and exposed to the mercy of her persecutor.'

'You are right. But need I fight this man? Would it not be sufficient to publish the truth?'

'It is injurious to the baron'; he will challenge you, and you cannot refuse to give him satisfaction, or it will be said you are afraid.'

'Well, I will give him satisfaction.'

'Then he will kill you, and you will not have benefited her in the least. You walk in a circle out of which you can find no issue.'

Alfieri stamped with rage on the ground. 'Is it possible that this point of honour can cover every enormity? What! because a villain is clever in the art of killing, he has the right to force you to silence, or to murder you? Strange justice of the world! If I refuse to allow myself to be assassinated by this cut-throat, a thousand voices will be raised to brand me as a coward, and my celebrity will only serve to publish my shame to every corner of the world, and render my name more despicable. Since life is nothing but an arena of gladiators, why was I not taught to shed blood? What use is what I am and what I know to me? O God! I would barter my genius, my glory, everything, for the science of a fencing-master. What's to be done—what's to be done?'

'Formerly a *bravo* might have served your turn; unfortunately they are out of fashion now.'

Alfieri shook his head and remained pensive. But he suddenly awoke from his revery: 'Yes,' murmured he, 'it must be so; it's the only means I have.'

'What are you going to do?' asked his friend.

'You shall know very soon,' answered the count, and he left the room.

The following hours were employed by him in arranging his affairs and writing his last instructions. However firm the soul may be, such preparations cannot but weigh heavily upon it. There is always some smiling corner in life, some happy spot, which we then recall to mind, and to which the humid eye looks back with regret. How many doubts arise, how many anxieties do we rake up from the bottom of our hearts! Will our name be long remembered? Who will weep for our loss?—Melancholy reflections, to solve which we dare not consult the experience of the past.

And Alfieri thought of all this: of the mountains where he had passed his boyhood; of his first emotions; of his first verses; of the old woman's prediction, which was now, doubtless, about to be accomplished. He then examined his papers, separating his finished compositions from those which he had as yet as it were only sketched out, the children of his imagination, which he intended to have impressed with the whole power of his genius and experience. Oh! how many dreams begun, how many inspirations which had formerly but faintly glimmered on his mind, then burst upon him in all their glory! and he groaned, the poet, for that moment had furnished him with more ideas than the labour of a whole life could develope. And he was about to hazard all this against the dexterity of a bravo. He

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pressed his hand against his forehead, as if to tear from it the treasures which were about to perish with him. For so it is with man: he considers his intelligence as the common inheritance of humanity, and that, were he to keep aught of it to himself, he would commit a robbery on mankind. He cannot take upon himself to carry with him a thought unexpressed.

But time passed away. The count rapidly finished to put everything in order. He wrote to his sister, bade an eternal adieu to everything he loved in this world, and then descended into the saloon.

Cellini and Marliano were there alone. The former was warm in praise of a volume of Machiavel which he held in his hand.

'I do not know it,' said Marliano, coolly.

'Should you wish to read it?' asked the young man, presenting him the book.

'I never read.'

Cellini looked at him with astonishment. This was the epoch of the regeneration of ideas which signalized the end of the eighteenth century. The nobility seemed to have suddenly awoke from the long torpidity in which they had lain, to study something more than the mere art of gallantry, or the noble science of arms. There was a universal rush towards literature, so that a man who declared that he could not read, was considered as extraordinary a being as a courtier of the reign of Charles the Second who lived without a mistress.

The count, who on entering had remarked Cellini's surprise, observed—

'Signor Marliano is quite right; what can gentlemen have to do with books?'

Marliano looked at him, as if to discover whether he was not victimized; but the count's features were so calm that he hardly knew what to conjecture.

'If you really think so, my dear count,' said Cellini, laughing, 'I wonder at your passing whole nights over your books, as you are accustomed to do.'

'Oh! as for me,' rejoined the count, 'I'm a poet, a madman! I love Plutarch, and am foolish enough to consider such words as liberty, country, as anything but ridiculous. I am one of those who would not have every man's happiness or misery depend on the chance of birth. I dream of a world where recompences would be awarded to the most worthy, honours to the most devoted, happiness to all; but I'm a madman, you know, whilst Signor Marliano is a *gentleman*.'

All this had been said with so much calm, and with such a sameness of intonation, that it would have puzzled any one to guess the interlocutor's real meaning. Its irony was hidden, but was thereby rendered more poignant—you felt the goad without perceiving it. Marliano knew that he was attacked, and winced under his adversary's infliction; but he likewise knew that a quarrel would drive the marchioness to extremities, and he resolved to avoid it if possible; it was therefore, with a mixture of anger and reserve that he answered—

'I cannot accept your excuses, count. I am satisfied with the world as it is, and leave to philosophers and philanthropists, as they style themselves, literary knight-errants, the care of remodelling it between their repasts, as they would a play or an opera.'

'What can such a man as you have to do with philanthropists and philosophers?' exclaimed Alfieri. 'Ah, sir, you are really disposed to show us too much indulgence. Nonsense!—men who wish to enlighten the human mind, the monsters!—who love their fellow-creatures, the fools! The clever men are those who profit by abuses instead of combating them, and ornament their avarice and hard-heartedness with the name of principle or political opinions; who grind down the poor to satisfy their habits of indolence and extravagance, and become wealthy on the miseries of others less privileged than themselves. Those are the persons who know how to live; them we should take for our models. Neither is it difficult, heaven knows, to lead the life of the exquisites of high life; ruin your creditors, dishonour as many women as possible, kill a few of your most intimate friends in a duel, and you will leave behind you the reputation of a most perfect gentleman.'

Whilst Alfieri had been speaking, Marliano seemed devoured by an increasing irritation. At the last words pronounced by the count, he turned round suddenly, but, as if he wished to avoid a quarrel at any price, he advanced towards a chair on which he had left his hat and took it up.

'Pardon me, signor,' said Alfieri, 'perhaps I have wounded your political opinions. I should really be very much grieved if you were obliged to leave the room on my account, although certainly very much flattered at your thus acknowledging yourself conquered.'

Marliano threw down his hat. 'I was never conquered by anybody,' said he haughtily.

Alfieri bowed; a vague smile played on his lips. For a few moments the three persons present were silent. Cellini, embarrassed, hardly knew what his friend was aiming at, and the Genoese evidently seeking to avoid a rupture. He had approached the sideboard, and seemed to be inhaling the perfumes of some rare flowers in a crystal vase, when his eyes fell on a case of pistols, which Cellini had placed there on his return from the shooting-gallery. He opened the box, took out a pistol, which he examined carelessly, and approached the window.

'Are you satisfied with these arms?' asked he of Cellini.

'Very much so; they are of the manufactory of Cosimo.'

'Will you allow me to try them?'

'Certainly.'

Marliano looked out of the window. 'You see that flower yonder,' said he, pointing to

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a rose-bud, which was the only one left on the bush.

'Yes; but it's out of pistol-shot.'

Marliano fired.

'Ah signor!' exclaimed Cellini.

'The flower is down of course,' said the count, who had remained at the other extremity of the apartment.

'You seem to jest, but it's a fact.'

The count smiled; he saw that Marliano wanted to frighten him.

'By Jove, Signor Marliano,' said Cellini, who was still looking at the flower, 'if we ever fight, I should not feel inclined to choose pistols as the weapons.'

'Why not?' exclaimed Alfieri; 'on account of the flower?'

'No, no; on my own account.'

'Dear me! who knows? it frequently happens that this extraordinary dexterity will disappear at the moment of danger.'

Marliano made a movement.

'I do not say that for you, signor; but the most clever villain cannot always support the look of an honest man, and his conscience will sometimes make his hand tremble. Indeed there are many who only make a parade of their skill, in order to avoid a more dangerous struggle, and who volunteer a proof of their address to dispense with giving a proof of courage.'

'Count!' exclaimed Marliano, springing towards Alfieri.

'Once more I do not say that for you,' quietly returned the latter.

'This assurance is useless,' said Marliano, his lips trembling with rage. 'I know that you dare not address such words to me. Poets are prudent; they only insult by allusions; they never provoke, except from under cover of an oratorical precaution; and when we are tired with their disguised insolence, they feign to be ignorant of its cause; in case of necessity, they might even invoke their bad health, and call themselves too ill to have any honour.'

'You do not mean that for me, either, I suppose,' said the count mildly.

'I leave you the judge of that, sir.'

'O no,' continued Alfieri; 'for if such were the case, the Signor Marliano knows that I might demand satisfaction.'

'Who hinders you from doing so?'

'You then recognize that I have the right to do it? You own that your insolence was directed towards me—that I am insulted?'

'Be it so.'

Alfieri sprang towards the Genoese, and seizing his hand—'I have the choice of arms, sir,' exclaimed he.

'It matters not to me.'

'We shall soon see.' He ran to the sideboard, seized Cellini's pistols, and returning to Marliano—'Choose,' said he.

'But one of the pistols is unloaded.'

'The other will suffice for one of us.'

'What!—do you want to fight?'

'Muzzle to muzzle; and God defend the right.'

'It is impossible,' exclaimed Marliano.

'Pardon me, signor, I am insulted; you have said it. I have the right to impose the conditions; you have said that too. You cannot refuse, unless you be a vile coward. The point of honour, which has served you so frequently, is against you now. You hoped that, like so many others of your victims, I should be fool enough to stand up to serve as a mark for your bullet or your sword, that you might cut me down as you did that flower, with a smile on your lips. But you were mistaken, Baron Rocca.'

'Ah! you know my name, do you?'

'Yes, and think not that I will yield a single fraction of my advantages. I do not fight to make a parade of bravery or generosity, but to deliver the marchioness from your odious persecutions. I fight to kill you.'

'Your hope may be deceived,' exclaimed the baron, whose surprise was now turned into fury.

'I know it; but whatever be the issue of this combat, Bianca will have nothing more to fear from your tyranny. I have taken all my precautions; if I succumb, all Italy will know the cause of my death; I shall have bought with my blood the right of publishing your infamy; and I shall be believed, for the dead, it is known, never lie. I shall be pitied, for my very enemies will take care to exalt my glory. Your fatal celebrity will be affixed to mine as to a funeral pile, and you will be branded as a villain for having killed me. I shall have broken the yoke which you have imposed upon the marchioness. Placed under the safeguard of public opinion, she will have naught to fear from you, and will require no one to defend her, for you will have lost the privileges of a man of honour, and all will refuse to give you satisfaction.'

'Enough! enough!' exclaimed the baron, who was now beside himself, 'one of us must die. Follow me.'

'I am ready, sir.'

They directed their steps towards the door. Cellini stopped them. 'One moment, gentlemen—you cannot fight without seconds, especially on such conditions; it is impossible.'

'You shall be mine,' said Alfieri; 'the baron will get one.'

'Meet me at the spring in an hour,' said Marliano, going out.

Cellini likewise left the apartment.

When Alfieri was left alone, a sort of moral depression seized upon him. He passed over in his mind the events of his life; he thought of Bianca. Cellini's story had led him to believe that he was beloved, but was that sufficient now that he was about to engage in a combat in which his life was at stake? Was it love or pity that had actuated the marchioness? He was buried in these reflections when she entered the apartment with a book in her hand. On perceiving the count she stopped and blushed,

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but recovering her presence of mind, 'I was with you, you see,' said she, showing him the last volume he had published.

'Yes,' replied he, 'they are more beloved than the author himself. Before people know me, they seek for me in my works, they guess at me through the medium of my poetry; and when they come to find that I am a man like other men, they are astonished, and I fall down from the pinnacle upon which they had placed me. Even you, you love the poet, but you avoid the man: you like my works, Bianca, but you shun me.'

The marchioness attempted to reply.

'O! do not deny it,' continued Alfieri; 'you shun me, and yet you appeared to comprehend me. For an instant I thought I had touched your heart. Then it was that I loved my glory, I was proud to think that I should share it with you. Ah! why did you snatch this delicious hope from me?'

The marchioness seemed affected—there was so much prayer in the count's voice, so much sensibility in his looks, that she remained as it were spell-bound beneath them; she wished to answer, but could only stammer out a few words without meaning.

'Bianca, I beseech you, speak to me—you know that I love you; do not envy me this happiness, perhaps the last I shall ever enjoy.'

'What can you mean?'

'Who knows what may happen? you know the fate which has been predicted to me.'

'O! banish all such gloomy forebodings.'

'Well, supposing this prophecy were about to be realized—if I were to see you now for the last time—could you refuse a dying man a word which would make him happy? Ah! you tremble. Good God!—one word, only one—Bianca, do you love me?'

'Yes,' replied the marchioness, bursting into tears, and hiding her face in her hands.

Alfieri uttered a cry of joy.

'It is then true!—She loves me!—Thanks, thanks—Bianca, dearest Bianca!'

'Ah! why did you force me to speak, if you but knew—'

'Nothing—I will hear nothing, except that you love me—weep not, fear not. Now let my destiny be accomplished.'

'The clock struck—the count shuddered.

'Adieu, Bianca,' said he, pressing her to his bosom; 'adieu!' And having disengaged himself from her arms, he rushed out of the room.

The marchioness remained motionless. A vague sensation of terror crept over her, as she thought of the misfortunes that would be the result of the confession which she had made. She then remembered the count's trouble, his precipitate flight; a horrible suspicion arose in her mind.

She ran to the garden—Alfieri was not there. She asked for Marliano—he was absent. Her heart beat as if it were ready to burst. She ran to the count's room, hardly knowing what she was about—it was empty. She rushed to the balcony. At this moment the report of a pistol was heard; she uttered a piercing cry, and tottered against the wall. Almost immediately Cellini appeared at the extremity of the garden, exclaiming—'A surgeon!'

Bianca felt the earth turn under her feet; she stretched out her arms for support, and tried to leave the window. Suddenly a noise was heard on the staircase; the door flew open—she uttered an exclamation of joy.

It was Alfieri!

J. C. C.

PICKINGS FROM ITALIAN POETRY.

BY MAJOR CALDER CAMPBELL.

I.

SONNET.—MACHIAVELLI.

'Se senza a voi pensar solo un momento.'

If but for one brief moment of the year
I could expel thine image from my brain,
That twelvemonth should a carnival appear;—
And could I prove to thee the gnawing pain
Thou mak'st me feel, I would not shed one tear;
Nay, I could smile if thou wouldst but believe
The wounds my heart doth from thine eyes receive,—
For e'en the incredulous woods around us here
Sigh in soft sympathy when I complain!
All earthly sorrows cease, and every grief,
Of friends, or fortune, kingdom, country, lost,
Its limits hath;—*my* heart, by thee engrossed,
Feels endless pangs—for thou denyest belief,
Even in the woe that vainly craves relief.

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II.

SONNET.—METASTASIO.

'Leggiadra rosa! le cui pure faglie.'

Exquisite Rose!* whose virgin petals bright
The young dawn nourisheth with dulcet dews—
And to whose buds the zephyr bringeth hues,
Stolen from Aurora's cheeks of vermeil light!
The same sage hand that wafts thee from our sight,
Transports thee to eternal climes, where thou—
Divested of earth's thorns—shalt proudly blow,
In charms unknown before profusely dight!
Thus shalt thou, then, become a flower divine,
Which nor rude winds nor wintry sleet can blight;
But, in thy quiet grace, far from the gloom
Caused by each changeful season's sullen spite,
And nursed by hands celestial, thou'lt combine
Eternal fragrance and eternal bloom.

III.

SONNET.—METASTASIO.

'Questa che scende in bianca nube, e pura.'

Lo! where, on clouds reclining, white and pure,
Love's beauteous mother, daughter of the sea,
Forsakes her royal couch, 'midst night obscure,
To grace the earth with godlike dignity,
Behold her Son! with child-like ardour trying
The bow within his wanton hands to bend!—
An arrow 'mid the wreath he wears is lying.
And craftily he hides (that he may send
With surer aim) his shafts! On every side
The playful Graces pelt with flowers each other—
Flowers gathered in some bright Italian dale.—
'But who approaches weeping?—'Tis the Bride!
Why should she weep?—she doth not love another?'—
'Nay, simpleton, she laughs, and blushes 'neath her veil.'

IV.

SONNET.—METASTASIO.

'Onda che senza legge il corso affretta.'

What tho' the stream, that runs unchecked its race,
Begins its rugged course in limpid light;—
Soon, travel-soilèd, and with diminished pace,
It hides within some gloomy glen from sight!
But when confined in some allotted space,
Soon high and strong its waters 'gin to rise.
Till lo! a beauteous fountain meets the eyes,
And pilgrims turn to gaze upon its grace!
Ah me! that luckless stream am I, which burns
In every sunbeam,—freezes in each frost,—
And spent and stained to this dark valley turns;
Whilst thou, by holy things and thoughts engrossed,
Art that more happy fount, which, pure and bright,
Soars up to heaven, and dances in the light!

* Written on the death of a young lady.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF A STUDENT.

THE POLISH HARP-GIRL.

"Drumb gehet dapffer an ihr meine Kriegsgenossen, Schlagt ritterlich darein; ewr Leben unverdrossen Vors Vatterland uffsetzt, vondem ihr solches auch Zuvor empfangen habt, das ist dèr Tugend Brauch."
ZINKGREF.

One morning I was agreeably surprised by a visit from a valued friend, whom I had believed far distant. He had formerly been a student at the university, but had left it before my arrival. His was a noble, but a deeply-wounded heart. Born in a highly respectable rank of life, and destined to a studious profession, his spirit early revolted against its trammels, and his ambition prompted him to enter a military career.

By the interest of his family, which, though not titled, possessed some influence, he succeeded in entering the corps de garde of ——. He was thus brought in collision almost exclusively with such as were nobly born, and by them subjected to innumerable vexations. I will not relate the harrowing indignities to which he was at times exposed; he bore them all, and gave suitable retort. But at last came the decisive blow. An edict appeared, declaring that the officers of the guard should be composed exclusively of noblemen, and he was forced to leave the corps.

A perhaps pardonable vanity in one so young—indeed a necessary compliance with the wishes of his high-born comrades—had forced him to discontinue his connection with most of his humbler acquaintances. He had, perhaps, made himself more conspicuous than was necessary, though, of course, the eyes of all were fixed on the only plebeian in the body-guard, and he therefore felt himself obliged to quit the service altogether.

On leaving this distinguished corps, he had immediately gone none knew whither, and I had not seen him since that hour. He now appeared before me an altered being; there was a placid melancholy in his countenance, mingled with an expression of deep thought and firm determination.

My friend stayed with me some time. One morning, as we were admiring the effect of the sun-light on the old castle, the notes of a strolling harper reached his ear. He started, and turned pale.

'Are you ill, Walmer?' I cried.

'It was a morning like this, and such a harp!' he exclaimed. He paused and struggled for composure. 'I will tell you all,' he said. 'Listen to me.'

At the period of which I am going to speak, I lived in the beautiful but quiet village of Pyloski, on the confines of Poland. Naught but inhabitants of the humbler sphere of life were its indwellers. It was a still spot; not even a church was there, to break with metal voice its habitual quietude. It was situate some distance among the mountains, or rather hills, for their range is not lofty, and winds along in swelling, graceful undulation.

The foot of the wanderer in search of pleasure scarcely ever came there, it was so remote from the busy scenes of man; and to one of my mood there could scarcely have been formed a more grateful dwelling-place.

The house where I had taken up my abode was pleasantly situated at one end of the village, and stood by the side of a main, but little-frequented, road. Scarcely aught but the solitary *post-wagen*, in its two weekly transits, broke the solitude of that highway, which looked like a tarried channel, through which the tide of mankind had ceased to flow.

Accident had originally led me to the village when, in disgust and vexation, I left ——.

I was at war with the world, and, alas! I was not at peace with myself. I cannot say I felt humbled in my own eyes—I was too proud—but I was insulted and humbled in those of the world. There was a restlessness, a vague and painful feeling within me, which sought some point whereon to rest, that it might grow into a master passion, into an impulse which should direct the after actions of my life.

I had been thrown from the career of my choice—most degradingly thrown—and sensitive, perhaps passionate, as I am, it preyed deeply upon me. It needed but an impulse to make me hate the world and despise its cares, or but a kind smile to call me back to its affections and its sorrows.

In such a mood, I sat at the window of my temporary abode one lovely summer morning—oh how lovely! a morning among the hills—the dewy hills! I opened the casement; the air was balmy and grateful as the breath of a blessing. The lark was musical in heaven, and the glad note of the awakened world came cheering over the highland. The distant church spoke a good-morrow with its bells from amid the mountains, and all nature wore a smile, as though alive with gladness.

I leaned from my window, and inhaled the grateful odours which were wafted towards me by the wide-wandering wind, and I thought how they might be the tributes of far-distant lands—*there* might be the sigh of the eastern rose, and the perfume of the western violet. What a life of sweets is the air! And then I thought the aërial spirits might clothe themselves in the thin essence of the wandering incense, and bearing it further as a garment, might appear to the lonesome mariner with those mysterious sounds and land-born odours which often charm and startle him on midnight watch.

You smile! I was fanciful, was I not? Dear friend, I am so still, though many years have passed over my youth, for the heart cannot grow old.

The morning wore—the sun stood high towards noon—it grew sultry. The lay of the lark ceased, the voice of the distant bell, as it called the passing hour, became less

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mellow—I felt oppressed. At such moments one's thoughts revert to self, and the hues of life assume a more sombre colouring.

I felt weary, heartily weary of existence, beautiful as was this earth, and listlessly I continued gazing from the window. The heavy silence of the sultry air weighed my spirits down; I longed for some sound of human life to break the solemn hush.

As I was thus anxious, I thought I surely heard the notes of a harp coming from the entrance of the village—two or three notes of richest melody and then silence.

I turned in the direction; no one was visible along the road; but it swept with a wide curve from the further end of the village, and I could not see far that way. As the notes came not again, I drew back disappointed, and cast myself into my chair.

I sat in thought. It was not long, however, before my meditations were broken by the most entrancing music, and starting up, I beheld an angel—yea, a very angel—standing close before my window. It was a harp-girl; and seraphic music thrilled from her hand, as it wandered over the strings that toned with pensive melody, as though her harp had been attuned to sighs, while, with a voice so sweet that it echoed in the heart, she more chanted than sang a melancholy strain.

She paused as she beheld me: then fixing her deep thoughtful eyes upon me smiled and blushed. Methought her voice trembled as she continued her simple lay. I noted the words in my memory, and when that failed me, tried to supply the deficiency.

POOR BIRD.*

At break of day, its matin lay,
A bird all blithely sang, and gay,
Ere noon its song had died away,
Poor bird!

It has no nest to take its rest,
It roves all homeless and unblest,
Far from the spot it loves the best;
Poor bird!

Its wings wave slow, and weary grow—
Its wounded heart beats faint and low—
Is there no resting-place for woe?
Poor bird!

It pleads in vain—in plaintive strain—
Will none have pity on its pain,
And guide it to a home again?
Poor bird!

The voice of the lovely harp-girl trembled, and the tears stood in her clear, dark, pensive eyes. Never in the halls of a palace, or beneath the roof of a cottage, in my far wanderings, or in my native land, had I beheld aught so beautiful. I felt maddened. Like lightning the thought rushed over my heart—with such a being I might be happy. Call it madness—what you will, but the echo of the thought was, and yet with her you cannot.

'What my sad poverty at the time allowed me to bestow, I gave. She held out her hand towards me—though bronzed with sun and toil, it was a lovely hand—not knowing what I did, I pressed it to my lips.

'Are you unhappy?' I said. She drew back—she struggled for an answer. In that moment I felt I could not gaze longer upon her with safety to my peace. 'There—may God bless you—begone! begone!'

I dashed down the casement, and with my hands before my eyes turned hurriedly away.

When I looked up she was there no more.

I felt a deep, deep misery, and a harrowing regret. I had let her depart—I had let the angel pass away that was shown me once in my life. She would never come again. A fire burnt in brain and heart—a maddening fire. O! I had been harsh to her, I had driven her away, when the seraph would have sung me one more sweet song; and then she was so unhappy—*she* was the homeless bird with weary wing.

I could not rest. Talk not to me of cold calculating prudence; I know what you, what all will think—but pardon me, I care not—you should have looked into those dark melancholy eyes, and seen that patient, holy smile, the halo thrown round innocent suffering,—would you then have talked to me of prudence?

But I did reason—I did weigh prudential motives—I did, *I did*—what would you have more? I said to myself, this is but a strolling harp-girl, her song is but a thing learnt by rote—and you, you are so infinitely higher, what will the world say? Ah! there was the point. What *had* it said; what had it *done?* Should I sacrifice myself to that world that had thrust me from its bosom? Those were bitter, those were dangerous thoughts, and I tried to think lightly—pardon me, Zaleska, to think lightly and slightingly of the strolling harp-girl. In vain—I could not; that look of woe—that smile—that sad unearthly loveliness, passed before me then, in my days of buoyant youth, and as lively it haunts me now that the fore-shadow of age is on me; now that I have much of experience—have seen much, have suffered much—yes, it is present still; and now, after long years of trial, I tell thee calmly, every moment away from her was a lost one of my life.

I could not resist the impulse. I hurried from the house, and, unwitting which way she had gone, went in search of her. But alas! I found her not.

We have all a phantom that haunts us through life—a fairy fire, flitting away before us, and luring us on, and the faster we follow the further it flies. Be it glory, gain, ambition, love; whether it assume the form of an angel, or the guise of a demon, we follow, borne on by our dark or sunny longings.

* This song has been set to music by M. Jules Benedict, and is in course of publication.

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Strange as it may appear, and I am aware it does, this star, call it wildfire if you please, the wandering harp-girl was to me. But my tale is a tale of love. To such as have loved, it will appear natural; to such as have not, and cannot, I would close these pages, and bid them read senatorial debates or scientific essays. For myself, I have striven to cull the flowers and not the herbs, along the path of life. I have even stretched my hand towards the laurel that overshadowed it, but as I broke the bough the leaves withered and fell to the earth; and the flower that I would gather, the humble mountain violet, was so surrounded by weed that it was scarcely visible through the tangled mass.

With restless and disappointed feelings, which I then attributed to the blasting of my career, I wandered far and long. I remember it was at the close of a day in autumn, that fatigued and worn with my lengthened way, (for I had walked more that day than usual, and at that time most of my travels were performed on foot, as you know is the custom of our country,) I arrived at a wretched little dwelling, situated alone on the confines of a large moor in Poland. It was growing very dark, though the moon was up, and still shone faintly upon the white waters of the morass. Certain pale streaks of cloud, advancing rapidly like *avant-couriers* detached from a dark bank that lay upon the horizon, prognosticated that it would be a tempestuous night.

The shelter offered by the little dwelling was, therefore, far from unwelcome, though the lonely situation, the bad repute in which that part of the country stood, and the repelling appearance of the master of the place, would have intimidated many a nocturnal wanderer; but I consoled myself with the idea of comparative safety, from the simple circumstance of having nothing to lose but my iron-shod staff, my slender wallet, and my life—the latter worth little to me, and still less to any one else. I therefore entered the dormitory assigned to me without any misgivings, strange as was the place.

Though the house was small and mean, its walls were built of solid stone, of a sufficient thickness to have formed the battlements of a fortress. The roof of my chamber, though low, was of exquisite workmanship, and fragments of stained glass still remained in the gothic window. I shall never forget the beautiful effect as the moon shone against the casement. Among the rest, there was the figure of a saint praying. It represented a girl of the softest beauty, and a star shining above her; she seemed looking into the gloomy little room, and I could scarcely help thinking it was the guardian angel of the place. A supernatural glory appeared to cling around her, and I felt a heaviness of heart as with the darkened moon the lovely apparition grew dim and indistinct.

Fatigued as I was, I could not rest; therefore, giving up the attempt, I threw back the window, and amused myself by looking at the clouds drifting rapidly up over the sky, and the meteors hovering over the morass, the waters of which came up to the very walls of the singular building which formed my temporary abode. On looking into their depth, I perceived strange white shapes looming upward through the green stagnant mass; some in the form of human beings, and others just rising above the surface among the tangly grass of the broken ground of the bog. Exactly opposite my window, at some yards' distance, I beheld a gigantic white head peering above the level of the water, the face turned towards me apparently with a look of appealing earnestness. The moonlight fell upon its majestic brow.

A thrill of horror passed through me, and involuntarily I started back. I turned to look again, but the apparition was so unearthly and terrific, coupled with the scene and time of night, that I could not resist the impulse of calling my host, and inquiring into the cause of so unaccountable an appearance. He came—but his aspect was less calculated to allay apprehension than to awaken it. He was past the bloom of life; years had left the impress of their footsteps in furrows upon his brow, and the death-snows of age clung above them; but an intense fire burnt in his eyes, tempered by sadness; his figure, though spare, was commanding, and withal there was a presence about him which awed and repelled.

'What! has the old father of the moor frightened the stranger! Go to, stripling! He will not harm you. He lifts his head thus above his grave, looking for a greater foe, and when he has found him and vengeance, he will disappear again. Rest—he will not harm you.'

'But what means so strange a sight?'

'Listen! This hovel is part of an ancient monastic castle. It belonged to my father. He fell when Kosciusko fled. Our home was levelled to the earth by the Russians—this is all which remains; those forms you see, are the tombs and effigies of my ancestors, and yonder was their burial ground. The Vistula, as though in league with our oppressors, has done the rest. There,' pointing to a space of deep clear water, 'was a village; and here—there—everywhere, lie the dead, for this was a field of murder, called a battle. Ought not the dead to haunt it?'

'No,' I replied; 'the living.'

'Ha!' exclaimed the noble, looking intently at me; 'that speaks of spirit. We may become friends.'

'And shall so, if mutual wrongs make friendships.'

'They do—they do! I feel I could embrace my bitterest enemy, so he were an enemy to Russia. Art thou a friend to liberty?'

'The oppressed are ever so, and I am one of them.'

'Then we will speak anon. But now I will show thee more. Thou shalt see the great tyrant, the mighty engine—he often

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passes before me, my arch enemy, like a horrid phantom haunting me. Look yonder, as far as eye can reach—what do you see?'

'A long white line stretching along the horizon.'

'That is a causeway carried across the morass, and forms part of the road from Petersburg to Warsaw, like a chain cast by Russia over Poland. Well, wait—anon you will see him pass. He will reach Warsaw to-night, and must come this way.'

After an interval, a muffled roar boomed over the morass, and lights were seen rapidly flitting along the raised causeway on the verge of the horizon. Carriage after carriage glided by with its blazing lamps, and a body of select Cossack cavalry darted along the road. One could distinctly hear the clash of their accoutrements, the sound of the postillions' whips, and the call of voices, as the long clattering train scudded by like the demon hunt.

'That was the arch enemy.'

'Who?' I asked in a whisper, for there was something indescribably awful in the flitting cavalcade, and the intense look of hatred expressed in the countenance of the spectator.

'Who? Can you ask? *The Grand Duke Constantine.*'

He continued watching with a dreadful look the fleeting pageant, which at length disappeared on the opposite bank of the morass.

'See how he careers over prostrate Poland! The mighty man! Our devastated plains listen in silence to the boding roar of his chariot-wheels, as they thunder through. But mark me, stranger, there will be a tempest anon.'

The noble left me. I looked upon that weird venerable head peering over the moor with more of awe and interest, if with less of apprehension. I thought I traced a look of appeal on the prophetic brow of the sculptured statue; and then I turned to the pictured saint in my window, as though she could guard me from his darkening frown, but methought her smile was a smile of sadness, as mourning over her fallen country. Far, far as eye could reach, the plains of Poland spread around me, devastated, voiceless, cheerless, apparently cast prostrate before heaven, as though the whole nation were sunk in one silent fervent prayer. And then my eye fell upon that gigantic causeway, laid like a livid bar on the land. Along that road passed day by day fresh supplies of troops, and the poor victims of oppression were forced to labour at the task which should make the way more easy for the footsteps of the oppressor.

All this sank deep into my mind, and my own wrongs appeared in the background of my thoughts like the second shadow of some powerful apparition. I felt with what enthusiasm I could obey the call to arms, if the trumpet of liberty should ever clang for Poland. But then I thought how vain would be the attempt of an exhausted and prostrated people against so overwhelming a power as that opposed. I had been taught to believe that the ancient fire of the heroic race was dimmed, and that the adage, 'once a slave, ever a slave,' was true—but I mistook; the slavery of the body brings not that of the spirit—the soul can be free, and the heart unfettered, even before death unlocks the tyrant's chain.

Lost in deep repinings, combated by Utopian visions of a brighter future, my thoughts were almost abstracted from self, in pondering over the miseries of mankind. Oh! it is a proud feeling to forget one's own woes in those of our brethren, but a bitter one when our griefs again obtrude themselves upon those nobler aspirations. Thus was it with me; a soft note echoed in my memory of memories, and the lovely harp-girl of Pyloski floated past me in a vision. What a paradise might the earth be, thought I, were it not for the tyranny of a few, and the weakness of all! A veil seemed to have fallen from my eyes. Is it possible, I exclaimed, that man can be thus blind? The precious prize of liberty is within his grasp, he need but take it, and yet he suffers the tyrant's arm to be stretched towards it from the far distance—he sees it coming, he looks on—he arrests it not,—a moment, and the prize is gone. See, it is lifted away, and he beholds it shine above him as a glorious hope—like a star ever bright, but unattained and distant.

Short and feverish was my rest that night. Forms and phantoms of all descriptions flitted past me, and more than once I started up at the strange sounds and sights that surrounded me, imaginary or real. First methought I heard the strain of the wandering harp-girl. Again rich syren notes clanged from the musical strings, then came the deep impassioned song—not as before, simple and plaintive, but a full, rich, inspiring lay, such as would have kindled the dullest spirit.

Hark! hark! o'er Poland's plains
A sullen sound is breaking,
A deep strange footstep tread
As though the heroic dead
Were waking.

See! see! o'er the night-dark land,
A magic morn is stealing;
Standards of olden fights,
And arms of buried knights
Revealing.

Those arms in their ancient tombs
They guarded long and true—
Those arms the dead grasp firm
Where they sleep without an urn,
Poles! for you.

When the sepulchral earth,
Shakes to the tread of foemen;
Ye hear them underground
Clank forth with sullen sound
Their omen!

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On flies the magic gleam,
And plays round ruins holy;
That time to sorrow saves,
Where Poles in martyr graves
Lie lowly.

On! on! from field to field
Of Eldhood's fading fights—
Kindling from spire to spire
In freedom's deathless fire,
Signal lights.

Rise! rise! 'tis Freedom's morn,
'Tis her step the dead awaking;
She comes o'er the startled plains,
First to the clank of chains,
Then to their breaking!

The strain came from without: I started to the window, and beheld the form of a girl with a harp, standing at some distance on the brink of the moor, her dark hair streaming in the cold wind of the pitiless storm, and the misty drift scudding past her. She looked at times across the cheerless heath, where the fern welked and rustled beneath the wintry blast, and at intervals she struck a rich note on her harp, as though in syren signal.

Strange yet lovely was such an apparition in so wretched a scene. I could not forbear recurring to the harp-girl of Pyloski, and in some degree identifying her with the midnight minstrel of the Polish heath; scarcely could I resist joining her, but awe and wonder made me motionless. What could so unusual an appearance portend? She evidently was alluring some one by that single clang. My suspicions were rightly formed, for I soon beheld a group of men advancing stealthily along the moor. Methought I could see the gleam of arms in the uncertain light—perhaps the female harper is a brigand bride, or some syren placed to lure the unsuspicious wanderer to a horrid fate.

I felt a thrill of apprehension; I was alone and unarmed; at that moment I believe the harper must have seen me watching her, for she suddenly burst forth in another and a softer strain.

Here's a link for the stranger,
Of every land,
Disaster and danger
From firmest of band.

Betrayed and undone,
On the stranger we call,
For the ruin of one
Is the omen to all.
For the ruin of one is the omen to all.

She repeated the last line in a prophetic tone, and then vanished with the rude bevy which had been drawn together by her strange, wild lay. But as they passed the bank of the morass, every one of that dark band made a solemn obeisance to the half sunken statue, and disappeared.

LORD KILLIKELLY.*

BY ABBOTT LEE.

CHAPTER XXXVII.

The contrast between the luxurious elegance of Belgrave Square and the stinted and stunted gentility of the Temple Court at Mrs. Cavanagh's, was exceedingly unfavourable to the development of Walter Wickham's law faculties, and did not at all encourage his propensity to study that most fascinating of antiquities. In fact, he constantly found, that as his taste for lounging upon the yellow damask sofa increased, his liking for his uncomfortable stiff-backed chair in his lodging decreased; and no reasoning in the world could persuade him that his cold, comfortless, windy, creaky, musty, fusty apartment at home consisted better with the good of his health than the warm atmosphere of the well-furnished apartment in the square, where he lunched and dined on luxuries, besides feasting on love. Arabella was sweetest of the sweet. She always received him with a smile, and parted from him with a sigh, and Wickham really could not determine whether the smile or the sigh were most to his taste. Everything, however, was infinitely agreeable. The present was all happiness, enhanced and brightened from contrast with the dreary past; and if a few prudential speculations respecting the future did now and then present themselves, begging permission to occupy a few of Wickham's thoughts, he bade them begone and bide their time—he was engaged—could not be troubled—occupied with his happiness; and who could break through an engagement with so delightful a visitor, to listen to the suggestions of the dark and spirit-troubling future? Those who have felt experimentally what hard cuffings and buffetings the sour-visaged lady, Misfortune, can bestow on those whom she so delights to honour, can very well understand how agreeable it is, in the intervals of her favours, to solace themselves beside some little oasis of pleasure, and forget both the before and the behind of life; and it is more than possible that Wickham would have been content to have forgotten his troubles as long as ever his troubles would have been pleased to have forgotten him, had not a little *avant-courier* just intimated to him that he had come to tell him that more was close behind. This first intimation of annoyance came in the shape of the ascertained soundings of the bottom of his purse, which, not being quite so deep as the Bay of Biscay, allowed him to perceive that the treasure-cave was empty, the mine was exhausted—he had changed his last sovereign. Wickham felt as if he had received a severe blow; he actually staggered, and then, with much the same desire to escape from himself as men

* Continued from p. 63.

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feel who rush to the gaming-table or the bottle, he seized his hat, and went hastily to Belgrave Square, trusting in love and luxury to find a present opiate for all his troubles.

But, as we have said, misfortunes never come singly, being, like the rest of the world, fond of company. Wickham found his Arabella soft, sighing, sad, sentimental, almost in tears.

'My Arabella,' exclaimed Wickham, 'what has gone wrong? I thought that trouble never found its way here.'

'We used to be so happy,' said Arabella.

'And why not now?' said Wickham. 'Where is the use of anticipating evil?'

'Ah, but, Walter, we cannot go on thus for ever. Both mamma and papa say so.'

Wickham began to anticipate what was coming.

'If it were not for that unkind Lord Killikelly,' said Arabella.

Wickham felt himself very uncomfortable.

'And you are so proud!' said Arabella; 'you will do nothing for my sake.'

'Everything,' said Wickham, 'but the one thing to which I fear that you refer.'

'And that you would do without asking, if you had any regard for me.'

'I thought that the subject had been set at rest between us for ever.'

'How could I speak to you upon it? If you had loved me you would have needed no urging. You would have spared me the alternative of either forcing myself upon you or parting for ever.'

'Arabella! Forcing yourself upon me! Who else should dare to use such an expression? Parting for ever! Who says that we must part?'

'Papa and mamma,' sobbed Arabella.

'Impossible!' exclaimed Wickham. 'They could not, with such a purpose, have so cruelly ministered to my hopes.'

'They never thought that you would continue obdurate, especially when you wish them to think that your own happiness is concerned. They were sure you would relent, and they wished to see us happy.'

'Arabella! Arabella!'

'And they always said that you were too honourable to continue to come here so constantly, day after day, and all day long, without fully intending to reconcile yourself to your uncle. They were sure that you would not so trifle with my feelings.'

'Have they suffered me thus to fool myself?' exclaimed Wickham.

'They were certain that when you had waited a proper time, when your own feelings had cooled down, and when you had given your uncle's temper time to subside, you would make some submission to him.'

Nothing could have grated more on Wickham than this expression.

'Make some submission to him!' he repeated.

'No not any real submission, Walter; only, you know, you must humour him a little.'

'Humour him!'

'Papa and mamma always said that it was too ridiculous to be thought of, that you should throw away such a noble inheritance for the sake of speaking a few little trifling words; and you know, Walter, that if you were even to apologize to him ever so humbly, it would only be saying a few words, and that could not hurt you much, and it would soon be over.'

Walter was silent.

'Papa and mamma say that you never could seriously intend to lose such a splendid fortune. They did not like to interfere sooner, because they supposed that you knew best what you were about, and what was the right way of managing Lord Killikelly, only now they think that you are standing out too long—so, Walter, won't you do it at once?—won't you, dear Walter?'

'And if I do not?' said Wickham; 'what then?'

'O, but you will; I know you will. Papa says Lord Killikelly has fifty thousand a year.'

'Well but supposing that he should choose another heir?'

Arabella looked alarmed.

'And I have reason,' said Walter, trembling at the danger of his experiment, 'I have reason to think he will.'

'You think he will!' gasped Arabella.

'Arabella,' said Wickham, 'I have been dreaming for the last few months—pleasant and delicious dreams, but nothing more than illusions and delusions. I cannot deceive you or myself any longer. I am at this moment a beggar.'

'A beggar!' exclaimed Arabella with horror.

'I this morning changed my last paltry sovereign,' said Wickham, speaking with a concentrated spirit of bitterness. 'I this morning changed my last sovereign, and where another is to come from I know not. I have made to my uncle all the concession I shall ever make, and I have reason to believe that we shall never be reconciled—he will choose another heir. I find that he has been searching out some distant members of his family, on whom he is lavishing his favours; and I shall remain the pauper that I am.'

'No! no!' said Arabella.

'And now, Arabella, the turning point of our destiny is in your hands. I tell you that I am destitute and discarded; such as I am will you consider yourself promised to me, or will you divide yourself for ever from me? Bitterly do I regret that the wasted treasure of the last few months of my life has gone, but, with a hope before me, I will begin afresh, and labour on through toil and time until I can come and claim you. What say you, my Arabella?'

'I will ask papa and mamma,' said Arabella hesitatingly.

'I am answered,' said Wickham, a tide of bitter feeling passing over him; 'but ask them, doubtless it is right and fit that you should do so, and send me your answer—

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send it to my lodgings in the Temple. I am lodging in a mean house, in a narrow court, up two pair of stairs, in the Temple. You ought to know the dignity and condition of the pretender to your hand. Consult Mr. and Mrs. Hamilton—doubtless they will advise you most prudently, and let me know my fate.'

Walter Wickham walked proudly down that hall staircase in Belgrave Square and proudly out.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

Veronese having been somewhat more than commonly flurried, and hurried, and worried by Mrs. Rowland's never-dying and never-tiring pleasure of complaint, had just escaped from the regal splendour of the drawing-room apartments in Lisson Grove; and established herself, in the hope of securing a little rest for her worn spirit, in the cold and comfortless parlour of the mansion, when she was roused from her melancholy abstraction by the arrival of a visitor, and that visitor was Walter Wickham.

'I have come to you for a double purpose,' said Wickham; 'to ask a little sympathy, and to bid you a very long farewell.'

If the already pale can turn paler, Veronese did so.

'Whither go you?' asked Veronese.

'Abroad somewhere, no matter whither; perhaps into some foreign service.'

'And why must I sympathize with you?'

'On the circumstances which force me to the step. But ought I not rather to sympathize with you—you are ill?'

'No, no,' said Veronese, 'I am never ill.'

'Then you have your sorrows too.'

'We must all have our share, and I have not more.'

'You have a noble courage, my dear cousin,' said Walter; 'you put shame upon my cowardice.'

'Woman ought to have passive courage,' said Veronese, 'and men active courage. It is well for me to endure, but it is right that you should meet your troubles with a resisting energy that may throw them off.'

'I already feel your influence,' said Wickham; 'I never come to you without deriving something in the shape of courage from you. I am always happier and better for any time spent with you.'

'And yet you have been here but seldom of late.'

'I have not,' said Wickham, 'to my shame. I have been in a fool's paradise, and had no wish to leave it.'

'And your law studies?'

'There is no room for law and litigation in paradise.'

'You have then given up all thoughts of the law as a profession?'

'I have acted like a weak fool!' exclaimed Wickham—'weak and infirm of purpose—the sport of every wind, having no more weight than a feather. You know that I began my legal studies with the determined purpose of prosecuting them as a means of actual subsistence, and, as I hoped, of honourable independence; but I was lured away, and I could not resist the *ignis fatuus*. You know that it was a word from yourself which drove me, with an energy I could not resist, to see the Hamiltons again, and you are aware that I have been dreaming away my time, hour after hour, day after day, with them ever since.'

'I am aware,' said Veronese faintly.

'They suffered me to dream on in this delusion; nay, they did everything to contribute to it, and I, fond fool! thought that they did so in the abundant generosity of their hearts and their most disinterested friendship for me.'

'And you have found the contrary?'

'Yes, the bitter contrary. They trusted all the while to the selfishness of my nature and they judged of that by my despicable love of self-indulgence. I have been pampered on sweet smiles, and lulled by soft words, until they fancied that my prouder nature was sufficiently curbed, and subdued, and chained, and then they imagined that I should be willing to humble myself in Lord Killikelly's eyes, to save myself from being ejected from my paradise!'

'But this is the worldiness of her parents, not of your—not of Miss Hamilton!'

'She submits to them.'

'Ought she not to do so?'

'Ought I to have been lured on, and now to be discarded, whistled off, thrown away like a soiled glove?'

'Is it so?'

'Is it not so? I this morning received this letter from Mr. Hamilton, with this enclosure;' and Wickham gave Veronese an aristocratic looking epistle, written on one of the largest and finest sheets of satined and gilt post paper, with the remnants of a rich seal of heraldic emblazonment. Veronese opened the envelope; within was a similar sheet, bearing the impress of Mr. Hamilton's sign-manual, and another letter addressed to that gentleman, written in the crooked and almost illegible characters of that condition in life which counts among its privileges an exemption from the necessity of doing anything well.

Veronese read the Hamiltonian epistle first. It ran thus:—

'Dear Sir,

'It is with much regret that Mrs. Hamilton and myself find ourselves compelled to relinquish the favour of your visits at our house, as well as explicitly to put an end to any pretensions which you may have formed in Miss Hamilton's favour. It is with some surprise that we find that you did not withdraw yourself from our family circle as soon as you were really sensible that you could not on any terms regain your uncle's favour, as my daughter's interest ought not to have been trifled with; and, notwithstanding her excellent sense, her affections might have been entangled. Influenced by my paternal feel-

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ings, and by my friendship for yourself, I have been tempted into making one strenuous effort to reconcile you to Lord Killikelly, as it is really a pity that his noble fortune should be wasted on obscure and distant relations, as I find will most probably be the case; and I enclose you the reply which he has thought proper to send me, that you may see how utterly hopeless it is that you should be reinstated in his good opinion, and consequently the equal impossibility of your finding any re-admittance into our family.

'I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

'H. A. P. Hamilton.'

Veronese's lip assumed rather a scornful curve as she cast the aristocratic-looking letter from her, and took up Lord Killikelly's sheet of crooked characters.

'Sir,

'If Mr. Wickham thought that in employing you as a negotiator between us he was more likely to accomplish his purpose than by his own communication, he was greatly mistaken, and he has imposed upon you a very fruitless trouble. As for the extreme affection which you are kind enough to tell me he bears towards myself, I confess myself infinitely obliged for the information. His and Miss Hamilton's mutual affection is, no doubt, extremely touching, and on the part of the lady and her friends perfectly disinterested, which disinterestedness will prove entirely its own reward, as I shall never presume to insult it by mean, worldly, pecuniary gifts.

'I am, sir, &c. &c.,

'Killikelly.'

'Mr. Hamilton, then, has been interceding with Lord Killikelly?'

'Yes, to obtain a settlement for his daughter.'

'And without your permission?'

'He has dared to do it without my knowledge! As if *he* were privileged to interfere between us. But I have written to Lord Killikelly. I have disclaimed his meddling. I have told him that even if he would lavish his whole fortune on me, I would not degrade myself by the reception of a farthing. No, I would not blister my fingers with the touch!'

'Calm yourself—be patient!'

'*Calm myself—be patient!* Yes, let a beast of burden be patient—be trampled on—kicked—buffeted! I want nothing of Lord Killikelly. I can starve!'

'You can subdue yourself, and exert yourself.'

'No matter what becomes of me! I might die, and nobody would care. I belong to nobody.'

'Cousin,' said Veronese, 'we are related, if only by our troubles.'

'You bear them better, or you feel them less!'

Veronese did not answer, but an expression of such true and touching anguish passed across her face as went straight to Wickham's heart.

'Forgive me,' said Wickham, much subdued. 'This is another of the shapes of my selfishness of heart. But I am stung, maddened to find that my name has been carried to Lord Killikelly as a suppliant, not for his affection, but for his money.—With all his high-minded nobleness and generosity of character, how he must and will despise my meanness!'

'How strange,' said Veronese, 'that both you and my cousins should estimate Lord Killikelly's character so highly!'

'Strange!' repeated Wickham, 'who can rate him too highly? Strange to think that man generous, whose whole life is spent in actions of generosity!'

'Generous he must be, since you all agree in bearing witness for him,' said Veronese; 'and it may be so, since a certain sort of lavish liberality is sometimes found in people of poor capacity and frivolousness of character. But high-minded—it is difficult for me to consider him high-minded.'

'If you only knew him!' cried Wickham.

'I do know him,' said Veronese.

'Know him!' exclaimed Wickham; 'how has that happened?'

'You know his generous and true-souled kindness to my cousins—those poor destitute orphan girls. I have told you with what tenderness he had snatched them from their miserable fate, and with what care he was nourishing and sheltering them.'

'All that is only like him.'

'Having done thus much for his poor and despised relations, he was willing to know us all, and amongst the rest he has visited us, not once, but often.'

'Know him,' said Wickham, 'and yet doubt his true nobility!'

'But for the evidence which you all bear in his favour, I should have said that he was frivolous, little-minded, of a most meagre understanding, and for his foppery a very fool.'

'You cannot know my uncle.'

'I thought I did,' said Veronese.

'If you do, how strange that prejudice can so blind you!'

Wickham was getting rather angry, and Veronese rather piqued.

'If I were to give you the best specimen I know of a perfect gentleman, I should instance Mr. Kelly, who is one of our kindest friends and most frequent visitors; he has all the charm of polished manners, true refinement, and cultivated understanding, and a delicacy of generosity, that so embellish and adorn each other, as to put to shame the coarseness of mere vulgar giving, even ever so lavishly.'

'Such a description is Lord Killikelly's own peculiar right, and such is the man whom I have wounded, injured, and insulted. But I am punished—sufficiently punished. Disappointed in my affections, alienated from my natural relations, and a beggar!'

'You have now the opportunity, which happiness and prosperity could not have af-

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forded you, of proving whether or not you are capable of greatness. You stand now upon the ground of your own honour. This is a fresh starting-post in life—and now what and whither?'

'Abroad!'

'But the means?' asked Veronese, rather hesitatingly.

A flush passed over Wickham's face. 'I have no concealments from you. I scarcely know how you have established so much influence over me. Thus then—I have found Mrs. Cavanagh, the mistress of the house where I lodge, very kind to me. Obtrusive, vulgar, tiresome, it is true—but still kind. She has, too, the knack of providing out of nothing. Ignorant as I am in such matters, I am frequently amazed to find that she supplies me with dainties, and yet that my bills are next to nothing. She always tells me that she knows how to manage, and manage she certainly does, at least for me. Yesterday, in the first bitterness of my feelings, I told her that I wanted money, and that I had none, and desired her to dispose of my books and few effects to pay herself the debt I owed her. She has done so, and has this morning given me a fifty-pound note in balance; and so far from presuming on my low condition, she is kind to me, tiresomely kind, and professes great grief at my departure. This fifty-pound note answers your question. It is enough to carry me abroad. Is it not strange?'

Veronese happened to know a reason that did not leave any wonder upon her mind respecting Mrs. Cavanagh's cleverness at making a bargain. That lady, in the openness of her feminine heart, could not possibly find the churlishness of keeping a secret, and she had accordingly disclosed to Veronese, under the strictest charge of preserving the mystery inviolate, how that Mr. Kelly paid all Mr. Wickham's bills, and that the little accounts with which she presented him were mere pretences to satisfy his mind; and Veronese nothing doubted that this fifty-pound note, the over and above of Mrs. Cavanagh's bargainings, came from the same quarter, rather than from the overplus proceeds of poor Wickham's goods and chattels.

'You are acting too hastily,' said Veronese; 'upon an impulse, rather than upon reason and consideration.'

'Things that must be done are best done quickly; and, believe me, that in leaving England I regret nothing but my uncle, whom, in spite of everything, I respect and love above and beyond every other human being—and you, my cousin.'

A flush of crimson passed over the face of poor Veronese, but it soon died away. 'And is your heart so utterly weaned from its affections, so regardless of Miss Hamilton?'

'It is astonishing,' said Wickham, speaking in a high tone of moral philosophy, 'how the mists of our passions and prejudices appear to disperse at certain seasons of our life, and we seem, all at once, to see things clearly, rationally, and as they are. I verily believe that my feelings for Arabella could never have been of that intense nature which I fancied that they were, or else I could not feel as I do in relinquishing her. I have a strong conviction now, that I have been fooled and flattered into the persuasion of a passion which was little more than an illusion—a fascination of the senses. I remember well, in my prosperous and palmy days, how I was lured and courted, and I truly think that Lord Killikelly's opposition helped on their purpose; for young and silly men are always fond of asserting their own independence, and I never knew the strength of my own regard for my uncle, until my ungrateful levity had separated me from him. But I am altered,' said Wickham, with the air of one who thought he had gone through all Job's troubles—'I am altered, and no second Arabella could ever win a thought from me.'

'Men love those who seem to love them,' said Veronese, 'not those who deserve their love.'

'I shall never love again,' said Wickham, with the resolute air of a martyr.

'And if not under the influence of wounded feelings, why forsake a country which is still home to you?'

'I cannot live this lonely and desolate life. I cannot shut myself up in those dismal rooms in that Temple Court again. I must have occupation, active, stirring life. Before I came to you to-night, I went and took a last look at my own dear old home, now mine no more, where I used to be so happy, and where I was as much master as my uncle. And there were lights hurrying to and fro, and servants going hither and thither, and all the busy animation that told me I was not missed. Everything was going on happily without me, whilst I stood in the wet, cold, comfortless streets, like some cursed spirit looking into paradise; and I even thought that I caught a glimpse of Lord Killikelly's shadow upon the wall—but I could bear it no longer! I thought that I must hang myself—drown myself—shoot myself—anything to escape from myself. No, I go to-night. I have made all my arrangements. I came but to bid you farewell. To wish you all the happiness which you deserve—and you *would* be happy, if happiness were the lot of the kind and good—but it is not—it is the undeserving who prosper and are at peace.'

'Will you,' said Veronese, 'throw your fortunes on the cast of one die? I expect Lord Killikelly here to-night; he has of late given us much of his company. Will you stay and see him? His old affection would revive at the sight of you, and you might again be as happy as ever.'

'Never!' exclaimed Wickham. 'Never! am I loitering here, and is it possible that Lord Killikelly may come? What! throw myself in his way! Humble myself at last! Never! never! Let me go! Do not think

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of detaining me. May you be as happy as this poor miserable world can make you; and now farewell!'

People always abuse this poor dear world of ours, when they go wrong themselves.

'Stay for one moment, stay!' cried Veronese, almost breathlessly. 'You profess some little regard for me; suspend your purpose till to-morrow—pause but this one night—sleep upon it.'

'Sleep!' exclaimed Wickham, bitterly. 'Sleep! Do you think that I *could* sleep! Rest quiet in my bed, and do nothing! Sleep at Mrs. Cavanagh's!'

'Nevertheless, stay. You are too excited to act wisely. Mistrust yourself. Nay, then, stay, if only because I ask you.'

'I could not; I cannot. I should commit some act of violence! I thirst for fresh scenes. I cannot stay! I could not live out the weary night!'

'Go, then,' said Veronese.

Now it often happens, that those who have opposed the most violent obstinacy to the most tender persuasions, give it up instantaneously at the moment when they find those entreaties are withdrawn, struck with a sudden and generous compunction; and thus it was with Wickham. The desponding voice of Veronese went to his heart. 'You have been my kind, my constant, my soothing friend,' he said, 'and I should be less than man to refuse anything you would ask me. I will not go till to-morrow, but then at the first moment—at the earliest dawn. And now farewell; and if I see you no more——'

'If I see you no more, farewell,' said Veronese.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

Veronese had scarcely had time to smoothe away the traces of some strange and deep emotion, after Wickham's departure, before she was roused by a most tremendously energetic knock at the door, long enough to have been divided among half-a-dozen lords, and guessing whom it might be, she gave their one-for-every-thing maid the unwonted order to introduce Lord Killikelly into the parlour, rather than into the family reception-room above, being for once anxious to have him all to herself.

Ravel, dressed beyond all previous dressing, up to the highest point of imaginable fineness, and perfumed with a thousand odours, entered. He had come resolved to make Veronese confess his real value—to force her to allow that he was the finest of gentlemen, and the most accomplished of lords. His darling project had been fed with thoughts and hopes so plentifully, that it filled up every corner of his mind to the exclusion of a single doubt of its success. To marry a relation of his lord, and thus to become a relative of his present master—how sweet would that be! and then, too, Veronese bore so strong a resemblance to that beautiful lady, whose charms had overmatched the prudence of the last peer, that he fondly hoped the case would be parallel. Of the pecuniary advantages, too, he was very sanguine—he was perfectly sure that Lord Killikelly could and would procure for so near a relation a comfortable government appointment of eighteen hundred or two thousand a-year—and then hurra, Ravel!

It is amusing enough to see people overflowing with their own thoughts. Thus full, even to running over, entered Ravel. He glanced round the vast extent of those apartments, and found to his pleasure and surprise, that they were alone; he had never before been so favoured.

'Very kind of you, my dear—very kind; now I shall have you all to myself—all the dear delight of your delicious society, without the trouble of making the amiable to the old people. I am sure I am the luckiest lord that could be found in Debrett's Peerage. Believe me, my dear, I am the most grateful of created peers, upon my honour, to be thus favoured.'

Veronese felt a great inclination to wrinkle her fair brow up into a few frowns. She had lately been in good practice, and her efforts, or rather, her unrestrainable impulses, had all been called into action for Ravel's particular benefit. Notwithstanding his supposititious place in the peerage, his perfections of mind and body, the merits of the most popular of tailors and hairdressers, and all his other adjuncts, and more than all, notwithstanding his elegance, eloquence, gallantry, and devotion, Veronese had done more business in the frowning line than she had ever transacted before, very often fancying herself aggrieved and insulted, when Ravel meant to be most complimentary, and giving him black looks when he thought himself fully entitled to sweet smiles. In fact, there was a constant war in the heart of Veronese towards the would-be lord, her feelings and her judgment being perpetually at variance; thus the strongest emotions of disgust were succeeded by a mental penitence at the recollection of Lord Killikelly's generous and tender kindness to her cousins, the young Warwick girls; and as often as her repugnance returned upon her, it was met and put shame upon by the recital of some high-minded act, or some liberal sentiment recorded by her cousins, or the witness borne by Wickham, who, even in disgrace and alienation, persisted in his uncle's noble superiority; whilst the multitude of kind and thoughtful presents which found their way to Lisson Grove, under the pretence of coming from her cousins, but of course emanating from the peer, left her almost ashamed at her unwillingness to do justice to the amiable generosity of which she was so constantly receiving so many undeniable proofs. These causes acting on the mind of Veronese, gave a constant vacillation to her manners, and a sort of pendulum-like alternation between admiration and disgust.

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Some counterbalancing principle of action dispersed the rising frown, before it evidenced itself in the disfigurement of the smooth brow of Veronese. Never before had she received her visitor so graciously.

'I am happy to see you, my lord. I began to fear that you might forget that you had said it was probable you might come to us this evening.'

'*Forget!* forget anything in which *you* are concerned! As well might my right hand forget to indite those epistles which my friends flatter me outshine into the shade the leaves of Strawberry Hill! As well might my tongue forget to pour out the floods of fiery water which—which—are as the stamp and the seal in the coinage mint of the laws of the land!'

'Your lordship mentioned your intention only casually.'

'Casually! O no, not casually. It was the law of my heart—my solemn and fixed purpose and intention. My determination to see you to-night was like the law of the Medes and Persians. And did you really wish for me? Really *wish* for me?'

'I did,' said Veronese.

'The earth is not large enough for my happiness!' exclaimed Ravel.

'Your lordship will permit me to explain to you *why* I was wishing so much to see you,' said Veronese calmly and coldly.

'Speak only, and with what thirst will I listen!'

'But first,' said Veronese, feeling exactly like some poor nervous creature who was just on the brink of venturing upon slippery ice, and wishing to procrastinate the flourish-off for a few minutes longer, 'has your lordship seen my cousins this week?'

Ravel had learned to answer very glibly on this score, but always as briefly as possible, for he too felt that slippery ground was dangerous. From the simple circumstance of being supposed to know all about the Warwicks, and not daring to show his ignorance by asking a single question, he could understand no more than that they were people to whom it was understood he had been amazingly generous and kind. As to the question of Veronese, he replied off-hand:

'I have seen them—yes—let me see—to-day—yesterday—the day before—yes. I have seen them, but my head is so full of most important legislative concerns, that I cannot exactly say when; but they were well, and sent their love to you.'

'If you have not seen my cousins since yesterday, your lordship must allow me to offer myself what I charged them to present to you; I mean our united thanks for your most kind present.'

Now Ravel had not the least idea in the world what this present could have been, for, with all his vigilance over his lord, and his superintendence over his letters and bills, he could not even guess in what shape this munificent gift of his had come.

'Pray do not give yourself the trouble to thank me. Have you,' Ravel was going to say, 'tried it on?' and he then thought he would say, 'tasted it;' but both of these phrases seeming dangerous, he exchanged them for, 'made any use of it?'

'Mamma drank your health in a glass to-day.'

That was clear enough, so Ravel went on courageously.

'Kind soul. I hope my wine-merchant sent it good. I shall show him my displeasure if he has not; and indeed the fellow ought, for if I were to withdraw my favour and patronage from him, he would lose everything—the custom of the whole fashionable world. Being Lord Killikelly's wine-merchant has given him quite a vogue in the fashionable world. If I were to withdraw it, the man would be ruined; and I *shall* withdraw it, if he has not sent your mamma champagne of the finest quality. I ordered it to be such.'

'It was madeira.'

'O yes, now I remember, it was madeira. I recollect thinking that madeira would be better for her health. Pray excuse my forgetfulness—but my head is so entranced with the considerations of political jurisprudence, and the weighty responsibility of being the leader of my party, that I hope I may be forgiven for a minor forgetfulness of the atomic theory. Not that, as my friends would say, the affairs of an empire are too great to lie like a nutshell in my mind, or that anything relating to your most charming self ever so remotely, even your mamma, could be less than gigantic in my appreciation.'

'However your lordship may please to consider it, we are not the less obliged. And for your other present——'

'Pray do not mention it,' said Ravel; 'I cannot bear to hear it named;' and he spoke very honestly, for, however much he liked to hear himself thanked and praised, he dreaded more floundering.

'This is your lordship's way—always to forget the kind things which you have done.'

Ravel did more than forget: he never knew them.

'I can scarcely make you understand them, or recall them to your mind.'

'I make a rule of never remembering them. I do, upon my honour.'

'It is a generous, but almost a wonderful forgetfulness. However recent they may be, your lordship always affects ignorance; but if it is true liberality on your part to forget, it would be real ingratitude in us, and I charged my cousins to offer you all thanks in my mamma's name.'

'Good soul that mamma of yours—only a little vapourish.'

'As to my cousins,' continued Veronese, striving to approach some point in her own mind, and yet feeling the difficulty, 'they are never weary of extolling your high-mindedness and liberality.'

'Dear creatures!' said Ravel.

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'And I am so encouraged by the nobleness of character for which they vouch, that I am about to presume to speak to you on a matter which affects the whole existence of another individual, and, as I think, some portion of your own happiness. I am going to throw myself on that nobility of soul which everybody says that you possess.'

'Do I not belong to the nobility?' said Ravel, with some simplicity.

Veronese felt rather disconcerted, but she went on, almost breathlessly, and without giving herself time to pause in her desperation. 'I meant, Lord Killikelly, to appeal to your heart—to your old affections—to your generosity, in behalf of your nephew, Mr. Wickham. If you knew how well he still loves and honours you, you would, I am certain, restore him to all that he has lost.'

'Mr. Wickham! Do you know Mr. Wickham?' asked Ravel, sharply.

'I do,' said Veronese; 'I know him, but have only known him in his misfortunes; and if you could be made aware of how much he has felt, you would shrink from adding a pang to his sufferings. You would not crush feelings already bruised, or break a bending spirit.'

Ravel was dreadfully alarmed and disconcerted at the mention of Wickham's name. He seemed to be standing on the brink of a precipice, and groping about in the dark.

'Will your lordship have the generosity to reconsider this letter?' said Veronese; and she presented to Ravel that epistle of the peer's which we have already shown to our reader, and which Wickham had not reclaimed before his departure. 'Reconsider this letter, revoke it, and act worthily of your own noble self.'

Ravel took the letter, and read it very much as if he had never seen it before; it stood him in good service, for it furnished him with a clue to his own path, which he hoped might possibly carry him safely out of the maze which he was threading. To know what Lord Killikelly had said, enabled him to know what to say. He must of course be inexorable; how could he be anything else without signing his own death-warrant as Lord Killikelly? No, he must keep up his dignity, and deny even Veronese. If he were to quail in the slightest degree, or shrink from his resolution, he should have Wickham thrown at his feet in a moment, and be exposed as an impostor; and besides, in being unforgiving, he gratified his own personal antipathies, for Wickham had always treated him with a sort of haughty repulsion, which had made Ravel utterly dislike him. Every way it was wisest and most agreeable to be as disagreeable as possible; so Ravel mustered up all his dignity, and determined to do the offended lord to the highest admiration.

'And so this vain and foolish young man has presumed to trouble you? I suppose that he has discovered that you are my polar star, and he thought that wherever you go I must follow. If I could forgive all the rest, I could never forgive him that.'

'Mr. Wickham is wholly ignorant of my appeal to your lordship: it resulted entirely from my own feelings.'

'Your feelings! Never, as long as I exist, will I forgive him for making you feel any pain in your feelings! Never!'

'My lord——'

'He is wholly unworthy of your taking the least interest in him. He is a vain young man. He thinks himself the handsomest fellow in the creation, and you yourself must see that he is barely passable. His nose is crooked—his eyes can scarcely be said to match—his teeth are not even—he is too tall—and then his gait—why, he lounges as if he were lame.'

'Remember, my lord, that Mr. Wickham's person has nothing to do with his offences.'

'Why, you don't admire him, child, do you?'

Veronese had an idea that she did, but for once she had the wisdom and discretion to hold her tongue.

'It is to your lordship's generosity, and not to Mr. Wickham's merits, that I trust,' said Veronese.

'Mr. Wickham's merits!' repeated Ravel; 'his merits! I wonder where we should find them. But you don't know him—at least not as I do. My dear, he is a very vain young man, a very profligate young man, and a very arrogant young man.'

'Does not your lordship's anger somewhat influence your judgment of Mr. Wickham?' asked Veronese.

'Angry, my dear; I am not the least angry; how could I with my philosophy and the elevation of character which is generally attributed to me—how could I, I say, be angry? But for that arrogant young man—'

'Arrogant, my lord!'

'Yes, arrogant; and I will give you a proof of that—a proof. My lord has—that is, I—I have in my establishment, a gentleman, whom I consider myself fortunate, indeed, in possessing—a gentleman in accomplishments and education, and more particularly in eloquence, quite my own equal; in fact, I am often obliged to confess, that Ludovico Ravel, Esq, is even Lord Killikelly's superior in numberless things. You must know him—you must, indeed, my dear; and you will prize him for my sake. Well, this gentleman, who is a—a—sort of a secretary, and is so condescending as to do many little obliging things for Lord Killikelly—for myself, I mean—this gentleman once addressed a few words of advice to Mr. Wickham merely on the style of his hair, which you must allow to be execrably bad, and he got nothing in return but a stare, a laugh, and the muttered words "*fop*" and "*folly*;" but I heard him—*I* heard him, and I don't forget!'

Veronese looked at Ravel in silent astonishment.

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'Let him bite the rod,' said Ravel, bitterly; 'let him work as others do. Let him go and be somebody's footman—a valet, if he can get so high—as his betters have been before him—and if not, let him beg—starve—hang!'

'My lord!' exclaimed Veronese.

'I would not give him a farthing to keep his soul within his body.'

The reality of Ravel's passion carried him out of himself, or rather into himself—his real self.

'Lord Killikelly,' said Veronese, 'do you remember that you are speaking of a relation whom you once loved?'

'Loved! I never loved him! I always saw how vain and ignorant he was.'

'Then for the sake of your own generosity. I am pleading to you for one on whom you have lavished liberality from the hour of his birth. What a weight to Mr. Wickham's mind must all your former generosity seem, unless you renew your favour to him now! How wretched to a liberal mind to owe obligations to those who have ceased to love us!'

'He has had enough from me, I should think. I fed him, I clothed him, I lodged him.'

This coarse enumeration of vulgar benefits roused the indignation of Veronese almost beyond her own control, but she struggled against it.

'If your lordship remains obdurate, you will soon have only the memory of a near relation to annoy you. Mr. Wickham leaves England to-morrow.'

Ravel looked triumphant. If Wickham were once fairly gone, his secret was safe, and his hatred gratified.

'Let him go. He shall never see the colour of another shilling of mine.'

'He does not wish to do so,' said Veronese, proudly. 'He desired only your affection. The simple circumstance of Mr. Wickham's having left undrawn the whole of his allowance, which I find he has done, might give your lordship sufficient proof of that.'

'Art—all art and deceit!' said Ravel.

'Mr. Wickham is an honourable man, my lord,' said Veronese.

'He can wheedle himself into a lady's favour,' said Ravel; 'he has art enough for that.'

'I scarcely understand your lordship's style of language.'

Ravel had entirely forgotten his artificial eloquence.

'I should hate him if only for one thing,' said Ravel.

'And what is that, my lord?'

'He has tricked me out of your favour.'

'Mr. Wickham can never interfere with, or in any way influence, my feelings towards your lordship.'

Ravel stood in a deep brown study for two minutes, measured by the slowest clock in the world. If he could take advantage of this opportunity to secure Veronese to himself, persuade her to marry him to-morrow morning; never tell her that he had deceived her until they were on the brink of the ceremony, and then persuade her that he had done it in the desperation of his passion, when he fondly hoped it would be too late to retreat—could he not do all this, and make her compliance the price of his pardon to Wickham—with his person and accomplishments, she would forgive him everything. Women were always fools, especially in matters of the heart, and he trusted to Veronese to sustain the old-established reputation of the folly of the sex.

'My beautiful Veronese,' said Ravel, turning into the dying, sighing swain in a moment; 'on one condition you shall command, and the subjugation of my soul shall obey you.'

'What is it?' asked Veronese; 'I would do much to regain Mr. Wickham your good opinion.'

'I know that you have no value for title,' said Ravel; 'empty, hollow, reverberating sounds, like a pistol in the ear of Dionysius. You would not marry for title, would you, my dear?'

'I don't think I should,' said Veronese.

'Nobly said! No, I am sure you would not—and money, filthy lucre, that would not win you?'

'I think not,' said Veronese.

'And you would never tell the man of your soul, the man whom you loved, that he had deceived you?' asked Ravel.

'Certainly not—because he would not do so.'

'Certainly, I would not do so. I would throw myself at your feet, and confess that I had done everything for love. No! I know that your elevated soul, like mine, looks down on the mean considerations of rank and wealth, and I am sure you would be as ready to accept me, were I a humble troubadour, or only a man of taste and genius, as if I were the highest peer in the realm. Would you not, my dear?'

'Just the same, my lord, said Veronese, with an irrepressible smile of scorn.

'Then, my dear, I will say nothing about money and title; we will put them quite out of the question, though you would make a beautiful Lady Killikelly—a much fairer one than my late lady, my late sainted mamma—you have more dignity. Marry me to-morrow morning—I will get a special licence, and I will certainly forgive that young fop all his insults to me—I will acknowledge him as a relation; but if you do not agree to my proposal, I solemnly declare that I will hate him the longest day I have to live. I will hate him always as I do now.'

Veronese remained perfectly silent, seemingly as if gathering up her scattered thoughts into one focus.

'My dear,' resumed Ravel, 'my beautiful and angelic dear, I beseech you think nothing of the filthy lucre, think nothing of the high constellations of rank and coronets; but estimate me as I am, and let us be as

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happy together as beauty and talents can make us. Marry me with a special licence to-morrow morning, and trust everything to my honour.'

'My lord,' said Veronese, assuming that high and proud air which no circumstances could subdue, and measuring Ravel with her eye from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot—'my lord, I have hitherto, throughout the whole of our acquaintance, endeavoured to estimate you according to the judgment of others rather than my own. I have heard you extolled on every hand for openness of heart, for unbounded generosity, and for true nobleness of mind, and I have struggled against my own convictions in the fear that I was doing you less than justice.'

'My dear, you overpower me,' said Ravel; 'but I do flatter myself——'

'You will find no flattery in what I am saying, if your lordship will have the goodness only to understand it. Instead of the continued vacillation between my own opinion and that of others, which has made me appear to vibrate between admiration and contempt, I have now determined to act only on my own judgment. Your lordship is perfectly right in supposing that I attach no particular value to rank and wealth, when they are weighed in the scale against my own self-respect, and I should entirely despise myself for accepting the hand of a man with these advantages, if I should have rejected him without.'

'That is very pretty of you, my dear, and worthy of your angelic nature. I knew you would have the same tenderness of soul towards me, whether I was a duke, or only the scion of some noble house.'

'I should now think of you the same, my lord, whether you were a king or a beggar, for I have determined to think for myself. And as I am perfectly sure that I should have declined the honour you propose me in the one case, allow me now to do it in the other.'

'What—ah—eh—what!' said Ravel; 'decline a peer of the realm, with a town-house, four country-seats, and fifty thousand a year?'

'I should do the same,' said Veronese, 'if he could double the catalogue.'

'And one universally acknowledged to be a man of unrivalled taste and talent!'

'Whatever may be your lordship's catalogue of merits—'

'And one who loves you to distraction!'

'Your lordship will find out your mistake.'

'You must reconsider. You don't know what you are doing! Refuse *me!*'

'The subject requires no second consideration.'

Ravel grew amazingly red in the face.

'Hark you, my dear, you'll repent this.'

'I feel assured that I shall not.'

'You will, you will! You will go muddling on in these little poky rooms till you look as old and as withered as an Egyptian mummy; and when nobody will have you, you will be glad to have anybody.

Veronese looked unutterable scorn. 'I shall, at least, be happy in the recollection of this determination.'

The natural malignity of Ravel's character was fast getting the mastery over him. He lifted his glass to his eye, and eyed Veronese very impertinently from head to foot.

'My dear,' said Ravel, endeavouring to regain his self-command, and to speak with an air of careless effrontery—'my dear, *I* have done what I recommended you to do—*I* have reconsidered the matter, and my eyes are now open. You are right; it *does* require some qualifications to fill the office of my wife. The woman whom I should instal in that elevated throne must have beauty, wit and manners—I should like her to be another Lady Mary Wortley Montague. But for you, my dear—I wish you well, I do indeed, and I really must, quite out of kindness, just give you a word of advice. Learn to control your temper, my dear; it is amazingly vulgar to grow red in the face—vulgar beyond everything: and hark you, my dear, 'Sell when you can, you're not for all markets.'—Shakspeare. Hum, ha! ha! ha!'

Veronese turned her back upon the would-be peer as he went laughing out of the room; and his ha! ha! sounded on her ear until he was fairly outside the street-door.

CHAP. XL.

Everybody knows that visitors, like misfortunes, never come singly. The flush of indignation still burned upon the cheek of Veronese, when Mr. Kelly's, or rather, as our readers must know him, Lord Killikelly's well-known knock sounded on the door. He had only missed facing Ravel by the length of a house, and as the maid had still her hand upon the lock, it was opened to him instanter, and, catching a glimpse of Veronese, he went straight into the parlour, instead of ascending the grand staircase and going direct to the artist's atelier.

'Something has happened to discompose you,' said Lord Killikelly; 'and I am too much interested in all that concerns you to affect to be blind; so tell me what it is.'

'I scarcely know how it is,' said Veronese, 'but I always find myself telling you everything like a child. I think you have the keys of all our hearts.'

'Come, then, open yours, and let me look within it.'

'I think I had better open it, lest it should break,' said Veronese, with a miserable endeavour to smile, which ended with a burst of tears.

'Nay, my dear girl,' said Lord Killikelly, 'this is too serious. Tears from your eyes! I thought you left tears to poorer spirits.'

'And did you think I could not feel?' said Veronese.

'Not so,' answered the peer. 'I know that the softest hearts often hide themselves under a noble resolution. Come, now, tell me all; let us put our heads together, and perhaps we may remedy this trouble.'

'You will, at least, advise me. I want ad-

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vice, and I know that I can trust your kindness.'

'Such a compliment must incite me to do more than I can. Come, now, begin at the beginning.'

'I will,' said Veronese, trying to smile. 'You know that I have frequently spoken to you of Mr. Wickham?'

'I know,' replied the peer; 'and I assure you that I am only waiting for an opportunity to push him on. I shall use all my interest for him. He is only at present under a little cloud—it will soon pass away. I hope that your uneasiness has no deeper source.'

'It is too late,' said Veronese; 'he sets off to leave England to-morrow morning. He is in utter despair.'

'To-morrow morning!'

'I have trusted all along that Lord Killikelly would restore him to his favour—so frank, so amiable, so kind of heart, as he certainly is.'

'Probably he may do so when he sees a fit opportunity. Do you not think it possible that Lord Killikelly is leaving him to his present difficulties to cure him of his senseless passion?'

'Could that be possible?' said Veronese. 'But no, no; Lord Killikelly hates him.'

'O no.'

'O yes. I know it. Mr. Hamilton wrote to him to intercede for poor Mr. Wickham, and received such a severe letter back again in reply.'

'Yes, Mr. Hamilton wrote for his own sake, and deserved the answer. He wanted to manage a handsome settlement for his daughter, and to get Wickham acknowledged as Lord Killikelly's heir. Depend upon it, if Wickham were once fairly clear of all connection with the Hamiltons, there would be no further obstacle between him and his uncle.'

'O yes,' said Veronese, 'yes. When you came, I had just been interceding with Lord Killikelly for him, and we had—O such a scene!'

'With Lord Killikelly! You have spoken to me of him before. How is this? What can it mean?'

'He declared vehemently that he hated him! that he might starve, die, unless—'

'Unless what?'

'Unless I would—marry him!'

'Wretch!' exclaimed Lord Killikelly. 'But this shall be put an end to, and at once. And what did you reply?'

'I could not conceal my contempt, and he left me with insult.'

'With insult! I wish you would describe his person to me.'

'I know of no peculiarity which he has, being perfectly common-place, excepting a slight variation between his eyes—they are not both exactly of the same colour.'

'That is enough,' said the peer. 'I thought as much. He deserves a horse-whip!'

'It is to me incredible,' said Veronese, 'to see how people dote upon rank and wealth, and how blind they are to the faults of its possessors. Lord Killikelly seems a perfect idol! My cousins extol his nobleness of nature, and seem perfectly blind to the poverty of his understanding. Mr. Wickham, in spite of everything, seems to consider him as more than mortal, and will not allow me to utter a depreciating word.'

'I know that he has faults enough, and to spare,' said the peer.

'You are the only person who will agree with me,' said Veronese. 'He is, in my eyes, mean and malignant. You and he ought to change places. You have the true nobility; his is only spurious.'

'The world is a strange jumble,' said the peer; 'but perhaps by-and-bye we may all get shaken into our right places.'

'And in the mean time what is to become of poor Mr. Wickham? I don't know that I should have told you all this, but that I know you have been a true friend to him. I know that you have done many things for him.'

'Trifles, mere trifles.'

'Those trifles, as you call them, induced me to tell you all that I knew of him. What can now be done for him?'

'If he is out of love again with that empty Arabella Hamilton, everything is easy.'

'I am convinced,' said Veronese, 'that he never was in love with her. I believe that the fancy began in idleness, and was carried on in contradiction; and when he found himself miserable and lonely at Mrs. Cavanagh's, and the Hamiltons tempted him back, who can wonder that he felt the difference a luxury? But he has suffered for it all. Though I know not how it can be, it is certain that he dotes upon his uncle, and perfectly pines for his lost affection.'

'Are you sure so?'

'O, beyond doubt; and he looks miserably thin and ill.'

'Does he?' said the peer, and he began to fidget.

'Restless and wild,' said Veronese.

'I must go,' said Lord Killikelly; 'I cannot stay a moment longer. But make yourself happy. I have been studying necromancy—harlequinade. You shall see difficulties mown down like a harvest field, and everybody made as happy as the *dramatis personæ* in a comedy. Only have a little patience, and trust me in the mean time;—we shall get to the end at last.'

SONG.

IN EARTH'S LONELY DESERT.

SWISS AIR, 'RANS DES VACHES.'

BY MRS. CRAWFORD.

In Earth's lonely desert,
In regions above,
To mortals and angels,
There's nothing like love:

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It brightens the landscape
Wherever we go,
And beams like a star
On our pathway of woe.

When the myrtles of love
Breathe their odours around,
The music of hope
Gives to silence a sound.
O! dear is the spot,
Where our glances first met;
There sorrow will linger,
Though joy may forget.

All melody breathing,
All sunshine and bloom,
Love sings to our cradle,
And garlands our tomb.
Far away,—far away,
Where the bright planets roll,
O! there is Love's home,
In the land of the soul.

THE SOULS OF THE DROWNED.

A LEGEND OF THE SEA.

TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN, BY WILLIAM HENRY FARN.

'On the evening of the 29th of October they observed that luminous appearance of the sea, which hath so often been mentioned by navigators, and which has been ascribed to such a variety of causes'.—*Captain Cook's First Voyage.*

In a fishing village of Holland, hard by the sea, lived an old fisherman, upon whose family and fortunes there appeared to rest a peculiar blessing. He enjoyed in his advanced age powers still fresh, almost youthful, and his children and children's children, a well-ordered little flock, gathered round him for his pleasure and delight; and there was no lack of valuable property, which frugality and good management continually increased. In the village were many an idler and bad neighbour, who envied him his happy life, and put rumours in circulation, in what way the old Andrew had, most likely, come by his stores. It was, then, reported there, he was in league with the Evil One; that the latter brought him the olden treasures of the deep: or Andrew had been a pirate in his youth, and was now spending the gains of the poor wretches he had plundered. The whole truth was, however, that Andrew had set free the soul of a poor drowned person from the bottom of the sea, which was a prisoner there, crouching under an inverted vase The affair was, strictly speaking, as follows.

The aged fisher, although he generally made a great secret of it, would nevertheless, in the intimate circle of his children and grandchildren, let fall stray hints, out of which the others easily made up a perfect story. Andrew himself shall be the speaker.

'I have not always been so fortunate, as that I could see and reckon around me wealth, property, and affectionate hearts which might sweeten my days to me. It has been given to every one of us, to stand once quite alone in the wide world, and to feel himself deserted even to his inmost soul. Heaven suffers us to taste such solitariness, to the end that we may the more cheerfully attach ourselves afterwards to a dear human bosom, and learn to love God in his creature, man. My youth had been full of adversity and oppression. Sorely too as I laboured and toiled, the reward of toil would not come; already my back began to curve, and my hair to brindle itself with grey, yet I saw no luck before me. It was as though I alone was doomed to remain a single exception to the lot of all. Howbeit I murmured not. I had early learned to love God, and to put my trust in Him. One evening I went, as I often did, out of my hut, far beyond the boundary of the village, to where the shore stretches to a great distance, and the eye sees nothing but the lonely downs and the broad ocean. This was my favourite spot, because there I heard no other sounds than the roaring of the waves, and encountered no gladsome face of man, which might have told me how miserable and forsaken I was. And I certainly found not a soul to disturb me.

'The sea, for a great way out, was calm and glassy; I had, in fact, never observed it so still before; no sail and no boat, as far as ever I could descry; the sky above perfectly cloudless; the sun, which was setting, threw a gleam of yellowish red upon the sand-hills before me. I walked on to the place where an old wreck lay; I supported myself against one of its rotten timbers, and contemplated the scene. In the silence here, my grief now came upon me in all its force, and, much as I struggled against it, my thoughts took their old accustomed course.

'"Andrew!" cried I to myself, "to-day is the day of your patron saint; how little has he done towards making you rich and happy! Last year you buried your wife, and a few weeks afterwards your child also. How have you deserved so much misfortune? Had matters turned out differently, you would not have been strolling on here by yourself, but have been sitting with those merry fellows in the village, who live there without knowing a care, and have the best of their days before them."

'At these thoughts, melancholy got such fast hold on me, that I could fain have wept, but an energy in my bosom kept back my tears. I could do nothing but once more turn my gaze on the sea, whose repose and smiling aspect penetrated my soul. The sun went slowly down, and a colourless grey began to spread itself over the wide plain, after still long, solitary beams of light had trembled here and there, as though they desired to combat the coming spirits of the

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night. The heavens retained their clear, transparent hue, till they also had gradually filled themselves with deep shades. A gentle breeze sprang up, and cast with an echoing splash small riplets against the body of the wreck. I resumed the perpendicular to set about my return home, when my glance fell upon a phenomenon which I could not, at the moment, understand. For upon the decayed woodwork of the ruinous vessel, there appeared a luminous flame, that glided to and fro with great quickness, and shone with a bluish glimmering. I can affirm that I, during the many perils of my life, had never been conscious of the feeling that is termed fear. Despite, therefore, of my loneliness, and of the already advanced night, I experienced not the least alarm. I watched with attention the play of the singular flash of fire, and marked how ever and anon it disengaged itself from the wreck, darted out a tolerable distance into the sea, sparkled there with a purer light, and then came back again. I had certainly heard tell, that treasures sunk in the deep might be indicated sometimes by appearances of this sort; nevertheless I felt no desire to dwell upon it further, turned my back, and walked on.

'At that moment a voice pronounced my name; I faced about instantly, and now saw, behind the wreck, a man standing, as yet half-screened from view, who looked upon me with an aged, pallid countenance. I knew him not, and his vesture was utterly strange to me. He stood for some time without speaking, and his supplicating eye, with which he regarded me in a fixed stare, I shall never forget. At length I cried with a loud and courageous voice, "What is your pleasure, sir? Wherefore have you called me?"

'"Andrew!" spoke the apparition; "thou hast complained but now, that Fortune hath denied thee wealth, the which I will procure for thee, as soon as thou doest the thing that I require of thee."

'This speech offended me, and I answered quickly—"Pray, sir, what matter my troubles to you? If I have wished myself riches, I have not asked you for them."

'The wan form perceived my chagrin, and moreover that I struck a cross upon my breast; he exclaimed, in accents that rang upon the ear as exceedingly touching and impressive; "I am no evil spirit, Andrew; give me your confidence. Take this ring, and about the season of the third midnight dive boldly into the sea to the depth of a gunshot; there wilt thou find three vases turned topsy-turvy upon the ground; the middle one lift up, and deliver the soul of a drowned man, which is confined underneath. Then haste quickly up again, without any tarriance below, and without concerning thyself in the least about what thou shalt see or hear. When thou hast accomplished this feat, be assured that I will richly reward thee, and there never shall be an end of blessing to thee and thine."

'With these words he vanished without waiting my reply, while he left on the ground before me, something resembling a ring dulled by age. I was cautious not to meddle with it. "Ah!" cried I, "what are the souls of the drowned to me, I should like to know, who could be stupid enough to let themselves be cooped under a wretched old vase at the bottom of the sea? They may stay where they are, for anything I care."

'In this mood I walked quietly home, and when the appointed third night came, I stirred not from my chamber.

'The year that now followed reduced me still lower; I lost a small sum of money, which I had saved with much toil; a distemper broke out on board the ship where I served, and I was laid up for nine months in the hospital; when they discharged me, I came hither on the beggar's crutch to seek the place of my grave, for I was weary of my life. I know not how it came to pass, (for I wanted nothing there,) that, one night, I found myself once more on the desolate strand by the sea. It was again St. Andrew's day, but this time the ocean was not calm, it dashed and roared wildly, and the foaming billows made their sport with the old wreck, so that it seemed as if it intended once more to put to sea. I had not stood long here, when the well-known voice became audible, and the old man stood before me. Now I looked him boldly in the face as an old acquaintance. He repeated the self-same proposal as of yore, only he appeared much more pressing, and left, on vanishing, the very same ring behind him as formerly. This time I took it up, and put it on my finger, resolving moreover to perform the bidding of the apparition. "There's no help and no succour for you, Andrew, among men," said I to myself; "let us see, then, what ghosts can do."

'Not to be tedious, I came in the middle of the third night and descended into the water. To this hour, I know not how it was, but the deeper I dived into the ocean, the more it ceased to be ocean, and at last I found myself on a handsome verdant meadow, than which I had never beheld anything more lovely and luxuriant upon earth. A great many young men were assembled on the mead, some of whom were mowing the grass with gleaming scythes, while others tied it together in bundles. They sang moreover a merry chant, in which much was said in praise of a beautiful female, as well as of the reward which she would dispense to them when their labour was done. According to the admonition of the spirit, I lingered not long among them; still I could not deny myself scrutinizing the face of many a one, and then it seemed to me as if I beheld several of my own friends and acquaintances, who, many, many long years ago, had been drowned at sea. Upon a smooth level stood a house, and as I approached it, a lady of surpassing loveliness came forth to meet me, spread out her arms, and cried, in a sweet, fawning tone, "Ah, then you are come at last, dearest, to take me home! how long have I been expecting you!"

'At this speech, coupled with the sight of

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a form so bewitching, I had well-nigh forgotten the warning of the spectre; howbeit I rallied myself quickly, darted under the raised arms of the fair one, and onwards to a place where I saw the three vases standing. In an instant I had thrown down the middle one. I know not what happened to me then; in a moment I saw all the young fellows in the meadow rush towards me, the beautiful female uttered a shriek of lament, I heard it jarring and ringing in my ears to a stunning degree, and had the feeling as though some one was drawing me upwards very fast. When I once more recovered my senses, I found myself on the shore, leaning against the old wreck, bruised apparently in all my limbs.

'The good of this was, that the little wan old man kept conscientiously the promise he had given. I found by my side a leathern wallet, such as merchants used to wear a hundred years ago filled with gold and precious stones. But more still than this treasure was the blessing worth, which, from this time forth, visibly rested on all that I did and undertook. My life was, as it were, transformed; if formerly it had presented the rough side, it now showed only the smooth and velvety one. I took, besides, several journeys, next married my beloved wife here, settled quietly in the village, and accepted the good days which Heaven provided me. God be thanked! they have not yet ceased; although I reckon me near a hundred, I feel myself still fresh and vigorous, and when young merry fellows collect anywhere, I am among them, reflecting, of a truth, how once there was a time when I was shy of every contented face, which might put me in mind of my misery and destitution. This is the work of the good spirit.'

Now in the same village, where the pleasant adventure had befallen our old Andrew, there lived another fisherman, who was the laziest, the most dissolute and extravagant fellow, that you shall find in a day's march. His face resembled a withered plum, which has been boiled and then crushed; his eyes must certainly have once belonged to a water-rat; the diminutive nose stuck upon his uncouth visage like an almond on a piece of gingerbread; a beard, that looked like the bristles of a hedgehog, surrounded his gaping mouth, and his legs were not much thicker than whip-handles, and not much straighter than a sickle. The people who came to Peter Knöck, to transact business with him, must, forsooth, learn from his wife Martha, 'He was unwell, and could not be seen.' The truth was, however, that Peter Knöck, from early dawn to the late of evening, lay drunk behind the stove in his hut, and stared at the church-tower of Ghent, until he mistook it for a flask of brandy. In this state of affairs, then, Dame Martha took the management of the house, and bore the reputation of using a sceptre of so brittle a texture that it wasted away in the handling.

She often used to say that her husband was an old, unwieldy packet-boat, which, on account of too strong lading, could not make way properly; she, however, was a light-heeled frigate, for which the wind needed only to touch its slender stern, to urge it on its arrow-like career. The truth of this metaphor consisted in this, that Dame Martha looked after the fishing and the business in the day-time, and in the evening, when she came home, soured her husband's life for him; certain persons would aver that occasionally she thrashed him soundly.

These trifling *désagrémens* embittered Peter's private life. No enjoyment, such as really suited his taste, could any more be found. If he sat in Cornelia Delft's tap-room, it was not right, in his eyes, for the windows to have a view of the sea; for the sea was hateful to him, because he knew that Dame Martha was rowing and fishing upon it: in fact, he could have wished she might lie deep at the bottom of the same, and he and the fish be at peace from her. Dame Martha, however, was not of that opinion; she had excellent health, and bloomed in her mature years still more, as it seemed, the more visibly Peter Knöck declined. Indeed, if that good woman did not very soon oblige him in this particular, I don't know that our Peter had any ill desire to take her place at the bottom of the ocean, so heartily weary was he of the whole affair.

Nevertheless the pair held out together another year; when it happened that, one evening, when the fishing-boats ran into the cove, Dame Martha did not find her way home as usual. She had, indeed, a weighty impediment to allege why she could not come, for she lay now, in fact, where Peter had often wished and prayed that she should lie—namely, at the bottom of the sea.

Peter was alarmed, at first, at this sudden caprice of fate; presently, however, he rubbed his hands for joy, slipped into Cornelia Delft's tap-room, made them give him his flask, lighted his small stump of a pipe, stroked his bristly beard upon his lips, shut both eyes with a smirking air, and ever and anon leered at the ocean, for the first time in his life, with the most good-humoured expression in the world. For the sea was now his best friend, he thought, in that Dame Martha was lying at the bottom of it, and he and the fish had peace from her. That very evening did Peter run to the lonely shore, and—heaven only knows what came into his head—he seated himself upon the old wreck, flourished his hat in the air, and, with the remains of a pipe between his lips, he hummed in dreamy merriment an old sailor's ditty, which he had once learned in better days. The little black hobgobblin shape, with the shrivelled hands roving about in the air, and the reeking tube in the bearded mouth, traced itself, like the image of a shadow, in dark relief against the evening sky and the quiet main. But Peter Knöck did not long remain the only performer upon this solitary stage; presently there appeared

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a blue flame, that moved to and fro, and glided round Peter's legs. The story of Andrew now came into his mind. In the joy of his heart, and in the mood to which the flask in the tap-room had transported him, he felt not the least alarm.

'Aha, goodsire!' he cried aloud, 'are you there again? what, there's another soul to be set free, is there?'

The spirit, who now stood before him, nodded with his head in the affirmative.

'Come then, if anything is to be got by it, here's your man. I have regained my freedom, and am just in the humour to make your pockets lighter by a gold sack or so. Look alive, then, my hearty, and show me, as you have shown Andrew, the way down to your snuggery.'

The phantom made a wry face at this speech, which, evidently, was not very agreeable to him; without replying anything, he placed the ring upon one of the staves of timber in front of Peter, and disappeared. Peter considered not long, pushed it hastily on his finger, and no sooner had his foot trod the water than it vanished before him, and he arrived, without further seeking, at the meadow at the bottom of the sea. Here he saw, as Andrew had described, the young men engaged in haymaking, and singing a song besides, which celebrated the charms of their mistress, and the reward that she was wont to distribute to them.

'Ay,' said Peter to himself, 'and if I too could get to see her! if she be really as pretty as you fellows say, I will behave myself differently from the shame-faced Andrew.'

Hardly had he uttered these words, when he saw the house on the greensward before him, and a form stepping out of it, thick as a beer barrel, waddling along upon short splay feet. Her face resembled the rising moon when, level with the horizon, it shines through the mists in a fiery aspect, and a mouth dilated itself thereupon, armed with immense dog-fish teeth gleaming and white as the purest ivory. With this mouth and her little flashing eyes, she motioned to the stranger a friendly greeting. Peter was exceedingly alarmed, and had only courage to ask in a gentle voice for the three vases.

'What!' shrieked the female, 'are you not come to marry me?'

'Not just at present, dearest,' stammered Peter, and sidled timidly up to her. At that moment he perceived the three inverted vessels. With a couple of springs he was up to them; but now it occurred to him with horror, that he had forgotten to ask the spirit which of the vases he ought to raise. The heat-drops of suspense came upon his forehead, his limbs quaked, he saw the dumpy woman waddling towards him filled with rage, and at her call all the young men collected from the meadow and advanced, brandishing their sickles and scythes. Without reflecting much, he lifted the middle vase; when there awoke underneath a medley of the chirping of frogs and the crowing of cocks, which sounded, for all the world, as though Dame Martha was in her tantrums; quickly would Peter set the vase up again, but in the hurry and confusion it slipped out of his hands. The din and the screeching robbed him of recollection, and when he came once more to himself, he was lying half dead upon the sand of the sea-shore.

An ill-omened adventure this, of a surety; for honest Peter Knöck was, perhaps, not exactly the right sort of person to have dealings with spirits; but the worst of the whole affair remains to be told.

Scarcely had he rallied his shattered powers and hobbled into the village, cursing the water sprite and his topsy-turvy vases, when he beheld, at some distance off, a light glimmering in his cottage.

'What's doing there, then, I wonder?' he asked himself, and stealing closer, applied his ear to the keyhole of the door. 'Who *can* be talking away at that rate inside? Now really,' thought Peter, 'if I didn't know that Dame Martha was lying as dead as a mouse upon the bench against the wall, these scolding words could come from no other than *her* throat. However, there's no harm in a man taking a sly peep into his own house—so, let's see!—let's see!' With that he opens the door very, very softly, hardly so much as that a ray of light can settle on his nose.

But ah! what does he see?

The bench against the wall is empty, and in the middle of the room sits Dame Martha, and counts her fish in the tub, as fresh and healthy as if she had never drunk sea-water, and railing besides at that good-for-nothing idler, her husband, who did not let himself be seen yet.

When now the door opened and Peter went in, she received him in the usual way, and everything was quite in the old routine. Dame Martha's revival soon got wind in the village, and, much as Peter tried to hush up the true version of the thing, the wiseacres and prying spirits of the place quickly had it out of him.

'It serves him right,' cried many; 'what business had he, out of shameless bravado and greediness of gain, to seek out such a perilous adventure?'

Others laughed heartily at him, while they named him the pattern of a tender husband, who had even descended to the bottom of the sea to recover his beloved wife. Peter, however, used to shake his head, and contend that all his ill luck had consisted in a mistake; for if he had lifted up the vase on the right hand or on the left, he would have inevitably possessed by this time the good will of the spirit of the deep, and have ruled over tons of gold. Howbeit, he never had the courage to plan a second trial.

The legend, nevertheless, that the souls of those drowned at sea are imprisoned by evil spirits at the bottom thereof, underneath inverted vases, is a truth which no *orthodox* sailor doubts.

W. H. F.

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THE METROPOLITAN.

No. CXIX.

MARCH, 1841.

THE BLUE BELLES OF ENGLAND.*

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER VII.

TWO FEMALE TETE-A-TETES.—BOTH OF THEM DESERVING SERIOUS ATTENTION.

Mrs. Hartley's wise precaution in sending her cards before her, together with the judicious insertion in the Morning Post concerning Constance, answered to her heart's content; for never before, as she observed to Margaret, in a *tête-à-tête* dressing-room breakfast, on the morning after Lady Dort's party, had she begun a season so well.

'But this must not beguile us into any sort of idleness, Madge,' she added—'there is still an immense deal to be done.'

'I know it, mamma,' replied her daughter-friend, 'and I really don't believe that you are at all more anxious about it than I am. There is, however, one thing in particular that I want to speak to you about, and in my opinion it is exceedingly important.'

'Is it about Sir James Ridley, dearest?' demanded the mother, with a smile.

'Yes, mamma, it is; and I do beg you will attend to me. Of course, with your keen eye, you saw plainly enough last night that he cares not one single straw about me, in any way.'

'Why, certainly, my love, I cannot say I have remarked as yet, anything particularly encouraging in his manner. I protest that I think he seems to admire me more than he does you.'

'For goodness' sake, mamma, do not get any such nonsense as that into your head,' said the young lady. 'Trust me, he admires nothing on earth but himself, and is infinitely too much attached to Sir James Ridley, ever to commit the infidelity of falling in love with any one else. We shall never get on, if we do not, at once, make up our minds to receive this as certain.'

'*Soit!*' returned her mother, 'I quite believe you are right. But how in the world do you propose to manage him? I see not, I confess, any point to which grappling irons can attach.'

'I cannot agree with you, mamma. On the contrary, I consider Sir James Ridley as being about the easiest man, of his income, at present to be got at; and this, in fact, is what decided me to fix upon him; for I know that by nature I am exceedingly indolent. I have not half Caroline's activity.'

'You do yourself injustice, my darling girl,' replied Mrs. Hartley; 'Caroline is certainly a charming creature, and may perhaps be more *remuante* in a ball-room. But, after all, I greatly doubt whether the deepest of her plots and plans ever go beyond getting partners enough to ensure her dancing every waltz; whilst you, dear Margaret!—O what a difference!—I have watched you from a child, my treasure, and I really do not remember ever having seen you do or say anything without an ultimate, in most cases, an important object. I positively love and admire you more and more every day I live.'

'You are very kind, dear mamma,' returned the young lady, looking deeply gratified, 'and I should be sorry to think that I should ever give you cause to change your opinion. But we must not be unkind to Caroline, either; she is very young as yet, you know—under twenty, happy child!—and I

* Continued from p. 66.

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really think that sometimes she is not so very silly as you seem to think her, for I have repeatedly seen her pretend not to see William Whinstone, Charles Orchard, Frederic Templeson, and that sort of young men, you know, who are excellent waltzers, but not having a thousand a-year among them. I give you my honour that I have seen her as blind as a beetle, when any of these were coming towards her, if she saw any dancing men more to the purpose near her.'

'I am exceedingly glad to hear it, Margaretta, for she is very pretty, and it would really be too much upon me to have a second Penelope upon my hands,' said Mrs. Hartley, in a tone of great feeling. 'Would it not, Margaretta?'

'Don't talk to me about Penelope, mamma,' returned Margaretta, frowning severely—'I cannot think of her with common patience. I was told last night that Tufton Bossett has just given a hundred and twenty thousand pounds for one of the prettiest houses upon the Thames, between Fulham and Richmond. Just think for a moment, what that would have been for Caroline and me! Her conduct has been unprincipled, and I shall think so, and say so too, to the latest day I have to live.'

'You cannot say anything too strong of it,' replied the mother, with a groan; 'and don't you see how entirely she is losing the look of a gay young girl? What's the good of her beauty, if she is to go about looking positively like a married woman! It is enough to drive one wild!'

'Her *beauty!* Yes, that's just the cause of it all,' said Margaretta, with asperity; 'and I give you my word and honour, mamma, that if I live to have daughters, I would never desire to have one of them as handsome as Penelope. It is as exactly like, what you must have heard observed a hundred times, a young man brought up to the bar, with a fortune just sufficient to live upon. Does he ever get on? No, never! And so it perpetually happens with a regular acknowledged beauty. They fail continually, because they think they are always safe. Of course, I should not choose to have daughters absolutely plain; for I have generally observed, that it requires a good fortune, and paid down too, in order to conquer the effect of actual ugliness; but a good person, with tolerable eyes, a knowledge of effect in dress, together with a good solid understanding, and a competent judge of the leading traits of masculine character, will have a better chance, you may depend upon it, than any mere beauty ever had.'

'Perfectly true, dearest; I agree with every word you say. But this provoking Penelope, you know, is reckoned exceedingly clever too.'

'O yes! clever enough in her own way, no doubt; that is to say, she reads judiciously, and learns all the reviews by heart, for what I know. But that is not what *I* call cleverness.'

'Your views on all subjects, my dear child, have incomparably more wisdom in them than hers, with all her reading; trust me, I know *that*. Nevertheless, Margaret, I think you will agree with me, when you observe how decidedly Penelope is growing fat, that she can do nothing better than take a little to the blue line. It will throw her among an older set, where it is just possible she might make another hit, and take her out of your way altogether.'

'I should be vastly rejoiced, for many reasons, to see my sister Penelope well married,' replied Margaretta; 'but I have no fear of her as a rival, if you mean that.'

'Not the least in the world, I assure you; I had no such stuff in my thoughts. But you must not be surprised if you see me following the *Dort* style a little, now and then, in my parties. I suspect that Sir James is no great dancer, and if so, it will not at all do to have waltzing every time my doors are opened.'

'Decidedly not, mamma. To say truth, I shall have no sort of objection to your collecting a few celebrities now and then, for my hero is precisely formed to enjoy seeing them all overlooked and neglected, for the sake of his own delicious converse. I marked him wince last night, as one or two of the species appeared in his vicinity, because every eye was turned away from him; and this, observe, mamma *mia*, made him *un*comfortable. Now, if on all occasions during the remainder of the season, I take care to be at hand, ready to prove that one, at least, of the gay throng can see and hear nobody but himself,—this, as I take it, will make him comfortable. And this will go very far, mamma, with so systematic a self-seeker as Sir James Ridley, to make him think that he cannot live without me.'

'You are an extraordinary creature, Madge! Talleyrand might have been proud to make your acquaintance. I will give you a *carte blanche* as to whom we shall select for the purpose of making Sir James understand how much he owes you.'

'The first use of my *carte*, mamma, must be to arrange something immediately about an opera-box. I need not tell you, I hope, that I am not such a fool as to wish for it, with any view to my own gratification. Heaven knows, I would rather a thousand times spend the price of the box in dresses! But the fact is, that it is utterly impossible to carry on a regular attack upon a man who chooses to be thought fashionable, without having an opera-box to invite him to, or to meet him in.'

'I am quite aware of it, Margaretta,' replied Mrs. Hartley, 'and I will see about it directly. Constance Ridley must help to pay for it, though, for it is utterly impossible that I could stand anything like a decent box myself.'

'I thought all that was settled already, mamma.'

'No, indeed! nothing of the kind has been mentioned; what she has agreed to pay is merely her board, and all that sort of thing;

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and I really owe it to myself to avoid so absurd an extravagance as taking a girl of her fortune into an expensive box at the opera, without making her pay for it. My own dear children, too, so utterly unprovided for, as they are!' said Mrs. Hartley, in the tone of heart-felt misery in which she always alluded to her own splendid settlement.

'Don't let us talk of that, mamma!' said her daughter with a groan. 'It always makes me sick!—But about this box. If Miss Ridley is to pay, of course, she will always like to go—not so much for the sake of being seen, silly thing, as to see and to hear—she is so dreadfully new. But let her motive be what it may, go she most assuredly will, if she pays for it; and then just think if you will not run the risk of being canonized as St. Ursula, with her eleven thousand virgins? If the box be not as large as the Munster at Cologne, I see no possibility of any male dévot making his way into it, let his devotion to your saintship and your train be as great as it may.'

'You surely do not seriously mean to object to Miss Ridley's paying for the box, Margaret?' said her mother, fixing upon her a look of indignant astonishment.

'Let Sir James and his sister settle that between them, mamma,' replied the young lady. 'If you are as skillful on this occasion as you have generally shown yourself, I think you might contrive to make Sir James and Constance, between them, take one of the large boxes upstairs—in the second tier perhaps—and then, as you *must* be invited as chaperone, I might (as being so particularly devoted to music, you know) be invited with you. These boxes would hold the whole *boutique*, if he was civil, and that without costing you a farthing.'

'It is exceedingly well imagined, my love,' returned her mother; 'but I fear the measure is too bold a one to be safe.'

'Not at all, mamma, if you will set it before him in a proper point of view. In the first place, his having his name on the list for *such* a box would strongly tempt him, especially as his sister, whose name would not appear, would help to pay for it; secondly, you must remember, that a large party of ladies in a gentleman's box is quite a different sort of thing from any other so filled; and lastly, I should like to know what scheme would give *me* so fine a chance of success. Before the season was half over, mamma, I would undertake, in one way or another, to make him believe that I thought him more intellectual, more elegant, more handsome, and more fashionable, than any other man presenting himself for examination throughout the theatre.'

'It would give you great opportunities, my love, beyond all question, and would certainly suit me admirably well in all ways. We must think about it, Margaretta.'

'Think about it, mamma?' returned the energetic lady—'it must be done to-day, or not at all.'

'To-day, dearest? what a mind you have! I ought to profit by so able an adviser, and it shall not be my fault if I do not. I will screw my courage to it, Margaret, and attack Sir James upon it this very day. But keep guard over me; take care that I am not interrupted if I take him into the back drawing-room before we go out to-night; that is if I have no opportunity before.'

'Fear nothing on that score, mamma,' replied the gifted girl. 'I will buckle you against a million.'

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This was not the only *tête-à-tête* breakfast talk which had taken place that morning at the house of Mrs. Hartley. Next to waltzing, Caroline Hartley accounted taking her breakfast in bed the greatest of all earthly enjoyments; and whenever her mother indulged in making a boudoir business of the morning meal, in close conclave with her second daughter, (which was not seldom,) she never failed to get intelligence of the fact, and to *alitée* herself accordingly.

Miss Hartley and Constance, therefore, found themselves in sole possession of the little breakfast-table spread for them in the drawing-room, and were at no loss for conversation which might atone for the absence of the rest of the family.

The party of the preceding evening, of course, formed the chief subject of discussion, and Penelope had the satisfaction of hearing the novice declare, that far from feeling her high-wrought expectations disappointed, she had been even more gratified than she had hoped for.

'Perhaps we must thank Mr. Henry Mortimer for that,' said Penelope. 'Young ladies and old ladies too, by dozens, might be found, who would all declare an evening delightful, in which they had received as much attention from him as you did last night, Constance.'

'Mr. Henry Mortimer is unquestionably a most fascinating personage,' replied Constance, colouring; 'but even without his assistance, I suspect that I should have found the evening exceedingly agreeable. I cannot tell you how very greatly I enjoyed seeing all the distinguished people who were there. But I perceive that I have a great deal to learn yet, before I can consider myself initiated. In the first place, Penelope, you broke off your discourse at a very critical moment last night, when the carriage came to take us. You were going, if I remember rightly, to inform me why a circle, particularly known and distinguished for intellectual superiority, was—I hardly know what you said—thrown away upon you, I believe. Was that it?'

'No, no, no! most positively that was not it,' replied Penelope, laughing. 'The very nearest approach to it that I conceive it possible I can have thought or whispered, is, that I was thrown away upon them.'

'That is quite as mysterious as the other, and I entreat you to explain yourself,' said Constance very gravely.

'You entreat me to do what is extremely

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difficult, friend Constance,' returned Miss Hartley. 'I believe I entered the May-Fair drawing-rooms of London with as keen a feeling of interest as yourself, and as much ready-prepared admiration, made up in separate packets, as it were, and addressed with nicely critical distinction to the various *well-known strangers* I expected to meet, as even you set off with last night. I really do not exactly remember how the first dinner, or the first evening, whichever it was, went off. Alas, Constance! all this happened some half-dozen years ago; therefore all I can do for you in the way of explanation is to tell you the general result.'

'That will content me,' cried Constance eagerly. 'What is the general result?'

'That I never wish to enter a May-Fair drawing-room again,' said Miss Hartley.

'If I do not express my astonishment at full length, it is from conscious insufficiency of language,' returned Constance. 'But you cannot hope that so monstrous a declaration will satisfy me; or that I shall let you remain peaceably wrapped up in an atmosphere of cloudy sublimity, without tormenting you day and night to explain the cause and source of this supernatural contempt.'

'*Contempt!*—Yes—that is what one gets for daring to find out what is pleasant, and what is not; and for daring to avow it too. But, however philosophically I may make up my mind to let others thus describe my feelings, I cannot permit you to make use of so very blundering a phrase, without taking an immense deal of pains to convince you that you are wrong. Contempt for the distinguished individuals of whom we are presuming to discourse may, however, be a word useful in the discussion; because I will desire you to set it down as that which forms the most perfect antipodes, if you will let me so use the expression, to all that I really feel for them. Let every phrase your memory can suggest, which expresses the reverse of contempt, take possession of your mind, I beseech you, as what I would apply to the persons who have turned out the golden linings of their souls to enlighten and enchant their fellow creatures!'

'Brava, carissima!' cried Constance. 'Now go on, and tell me what it is you find "*not pleasant*" in these milky-ways, May-Fair drawing-rooms, where whole legions of stars seem to congregate into one bright galaxy?'

'Well, then, curious one, listen and learn. These galaxy drawing-rooms, (which, by the way, are by no means confined to May Fair,) though decidedly distinguished from all other drawing-rooms to be found in the hemisphere of fashion, have, nevertheless, one feature in common with many of them; namely, that the erudite and elegant-minded proprietors conceive that, in order to be perfectly brilliant, they must be perfectly full. Now, be it known to you, dear Constance, if perchance you have not found it out already, that nature does not produce whole mobs of marvels; and if five hundred human beings are gathered together on any spot of earth, from savage Siberia to learned London, you may be very sure of finding a pretty considerable majority of common-place intellects among them. This would, however, in no degree interfere with as much pleasure from seeing, and perhaps hearing, what is admirable, as it is possible to enjoy from anything in a crowd, were the common-place part of the society content to occupy the places which nature assigns them. But were you to pass through as many London seasons as I have done, you would be perfectly astonished at the sort of convulsive efforts to be pre-eminent and remarkable, which you would witness. I speak not of the second, third, or fourth class of authors, who twinkle through the crowd, and give a little flash whenever they can find an opportunity—all that is perfectly as it should be, and in fact helps to fill up the groups advantageously enough. It is a sort of shading off into clear obscure, of which no one would complain who at all understands the value of effect. But the malady, the *cochemar*, of London literary society, consists in the immense mass of rubbish that adheres to the precious part of the material, each atom being instinct with life, and crying aloud, "We are the adamant." They manage this matter much better in France, and a thousandfold better still in Germany—but here!'

'You mean, Penelope, that you should enjoy the society of distinguished people more, if you had them all to yourself,' said Constance, looking as if she thought her friend a little unreasonable.

'I mean no such thing, I assure you,' replied Miss Hartley; 'all I would ask is, that those who seek to live in the light of our galaxy, as you call it, should be contented to receive the light without attempting to reflect it, and set up an illumination of their own. But really, Constance, this is very idle talk. It is so totally impossible to convey to those who have not witnessed it, any idea of the self-seeking egotistical sort of worship offered at the shrine of our literary idols, that it is but folly to attempt it. Male adorers of this class exist, and, heaven knows, are detestable enough; but it is the women, Constance, the hundreds and hundreds of women who people the sunbeam of our literary atmosphere, which make it so intolerable!'

'Alas!' said Constance, shaking her head dismally—'unhappy ladies! Tell me, I pray you, what is it these poor women do? For it strikes me, Penelope, that I may unconsciously be in very great danger of doing the like.'

'No, dear, no. Had there been a shadow of such danger, we never should have been friends in the first place—nor would you ever have been here, in the second. O Constance! I would not be guilty of adding another to the rank growth of London Blue Belles, for any bribe that could be offered me—it would be very like imparting the plague in a suit of satin and velvet.'

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'London Blue Belles!' replied Constance. 'It was of London Blue Belles that Mr. Mortimer promised to instruct me, if I mistake not.'

'Be very sure of it,' returned her friend, 'for it was of him I learned the phrase. Poor young man! if all be true that is said of him, he has suffered martyrdom at their hands! After his first volume of poems came out, and was favourably reviewed, he received, they say, three hundred and seventy-six invitations to dinner within a month.'

'There could be no very severe martyrdom in that,' replied Constance; 'for at the very most, he could not eat but thirty-one of them.'

'But think you that the three hundred and forty-five disappointed inviters sat down quietly with their refusals?—not a bit of it. This was but the opening of the campaign. One hundred and twenty, as I am told, sent their albums, green, red, yellow, and blue, beseeching that he would write a few original lines in his own delicious vein of poesy therein. Seventy modestly entreated that he would only vouchsafe to inscribe his name at full length on a scrap of paper. It is positively asserted, that one hundred and three requested, each of them, a small lock of his hair; and fifty-two sent him poetry of their own composing, consisting of sonnets, songs, odes, and elegies, every one of them, of course, expecting some little original poetical offering in return, for which the previous invitation to dinner was considered to have paved the way.'

'This, even if literally true,' replied Constance, 'could only, I should think, be classed as absurdity, and hardly deserve to be considered as so very heavy a calamity as you seem to suppose.'

'If you had all the albums to fill, the verses to read, the hair to cut, and all the attendant compliments to receive, and render thanksgiving for, I suspect you would be apt to class it as a very heavy joke, Constance. But all this is nothing, absolutely nothing, in comparison of the intense misery which these Blue Belles inflict during the moments when their unfortunate victims, poor souls! would be otherwise exceedingly happy. All London society, dear friend, does not consist of Blue Belles. And it cannot be doubted that gratification of the very highest kind must be felt by persons of ability—more sensitive perhaps than any other to the opinions of kindred spirits, when such hold out the hand of fellowship from the retreats of divine leisure which they have chosen for themselves. It is not difficult to imagine, Constance, the sort of natural inspiration, given and received, between the idle patrician and the laborious man of letters, when, despite the discrepant accidents of fortune, their minds are in unison. I can scarcely imagine any intercourse more delightful than this sort of stealing, and giving odour. Nor do I see anything at all to object to, in that aristocratic skimming of superior intellect, which is so much the fashion among the very highest (in every sense of the word) of our nobility. Nothing can be more charming than where a real community of feeling leads the high in fortune to use his power of selection, by seeking companionship with the high in mind. But O! the heavy change, if you turn the medal, and behold the hapless man of genius picked out from among his fellows to gratify the vanity of "we literary people," as the Blue Belles invariably call themselves! Fancy the feelings of such a one in an assembly like that of last night. There were materials present there sufficient to form a perfect pantheon of intellectual divinities. Think how these bright spirits might have enjoyed themselves, had they not been conscious that they were marked down like game, and might not flutter a feather, or raise a pinion for a single moment, without danger of being pounced upon by the long-eared setters and pointers around them. Unhappy great ones! How I pitied them!'

'O what then is there good under the sun?' exclaimed Constance with a groan. 'Vanity, vanity, all is vanity and vexation of spirit. But the worst of all this, Penelope, is, that when a quiet little body, like myself, who would as soon think of beckoning the sun down to hold parley with me, as of wishing to make one in such a conclave, when such as I desire to look and listen, how hard it is that we must be classed in the same category as all these offending Blue Belles, who by your account do all they can to choke, smother, overgrow, and destroy, the delicate growth of genius, amidst which their willy-nilly tendrils force their way. This is very hard upon us—is it not?'

'And it is precisely of this which I complain. For, after all, these mighty men are as giants among us, and may win their way out of the crowd, if they so will; but as, for the most part, they do *not* so will, it is a most abominable nuisance that a parcel of utter idletons, (forgive the coinage of the word,) should place themselves *en avant* of everybody, and so beset these precious people with their clumsy worship, so smother them with incense, so batter them with blows from their *encensoirs*, that all beyond the circle of the chosen few, are classed together as Blue Belles, if they do but give the very slightest indication of modest admiration, or the very humblest desire to stand meekly on tip-toe, in hopes of getting a sight of what they know, perhaps, exceedingly well how to value. This is really terrible, and may fairly be classed as a great social nuisance.'

'Terrible, indeed, Penelope. You have schooled me to some purpose; and henceforward I shall never find myself face to face with a celebrity, without taking care to look too stultified to be suspected of caring the value of a grey goose quill about him or her. But why talk you only of the *fair sex* as the tribe of "we literary people," who, *par excellence*, seem created to destroy the pleasure which a metropolitan collection of talent

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might be so well calculated to give? Have the men-folks nothing to do with it?'

'Comparatively speaking, very little. There are indeed a few pompous dinner-givers of the nobler sex, who fall into the truck system, and evidently believe that the talents of a man-cook may be fairly set down against the talents of a man-poet. But there are more reasons than one why this offence, if indeed it be one, cannot be at all brought into competition with the sufferings produced by the blue calamities I have been describing. In the first place, their numerical force is about one to a thousand; secondly, the act of eating a good dinner is not classed by the inspired sons of Apollo, (*à ce qu'on dit*) as an evil of the same magnitude as that of writing in albums, and so forth. Besides, these gentry, who exchange their sillery for wit, proceed on a plan as unlike as possible to that complained of in the operations of the blue sisterhood; for whereas the former might defend themselves by logic resembling that of Shylock, and say

> 'I do not take your wit, if I give that
> Whereon your wit doth live.'

the latter, if called upon to prove that they make the same sort of atonement for their exertions, would be greatly at a loss how to set about it. Merciful sweet Heaven! is there anything of a sparkling or refreshing character in their verse-offerings? and their admiring sighs—their purring ohs! and ahs! of adoration—though they may show them all to be *frappés* in one sense, can they produce any inspiration approaching to what ensues from imbibing that which is *frappé* in another? No, Constance, I grieve to say it, but the drawing-room incubus, which settles so heavily on the breast of England's poets, (rhyming or not rhyming,) is feminine.'

'Upon my word, Penelope, I think I had better order my trunks to be packed up again, and take myself off,' said Constance; 'for I feel in the very greatest danger of becoming part and parcel of this said incubus. I begin to perceive that it will be better for me to sit under grandmamma's acacia trees, or perch myself, as heretofore, on the roots of the old thorn, and let my only offerings to the great well-knowns be, a tear here, and a smile there, without troubling them with any ahs! or ohs! pronounced within hearing. I must lose no time in returning to Appleby Hut.'

'There is no occasion for you to set off immediately, my dear,' replied Miss Hartley. 'You are young, rich, and handsome—and the sons of Apollo are tolerant of such adorers. Besides, you have not learned to pun yet—though this feline mode of demonstrating literary enthusiasm is by no means confined to maids, wives, or widows, advanced in years. I have listened to it till my ears ached, from the young as well as from the old. But I have notes to write to at least a dozen dear friends, so I must preach no longer. There is a new novel of James's for you. Enjoy it, child, and *be thankful that there are no Blue Belles* near to discuss its merits.'

CHAPTER VIII.

MORNING VISITORS.—A NEW AND IMPORTANT ACQUAINTANCE—CONFIDENTIAL COMMUNICATIONS, AND DISINTERESTED FRIENDSHIPS.

By three o'clock Mrs. Hartley's family party were all re-assembled in the drawing-room, and all in that pretty state of busy idleness which betokens readiness to be interrupted. From that hour till five, all their *habitués* knew they were to be found at home; and if any of these had a speech to make, or an appointment to settle after that hour, Mrs. Hartley's lozenge, and green and gold liveries might be found till seven, within the contracted space where equipages so filled are licensed to appear, as certainly as her house-door in Bruton Street, before it.

The earliest visitor of the morning was Henry Mortimer. His first bow, as in duty bound, was to Mrs. Hartley; and then he looked round for Constance, and having found her, anxiously fixed his eyes upon her face; not, however, to see if she recognized him with a look of pleasure—not to ascertain from her manner whether he might venture to resume the familiar tone of their last night's conversation, but solely to examine how her features and complexion bore the light of day—a point which he considered as of extreme importance.

Constance perceived the sort of pause which this examination, short as it was, occasioned, and fancied that he did not know her again. This produced a smile, which, happily for her reputation as a beauty, so enchanted the connoisseur, that he dropped into a chair beside her, deprived, as he honestly confessed during the next visit he paid that morning, of all power of being critical.

When Henry Mortimer chose to talk, there was nothing less than a thunderbolt or a pistol-shot that could stop him; and though Sir James Ridley and his especial friend Mr. Marsh, entered a few minutes after him, and even showed decided indications of intending to make themselves noticed by Miss Ridley, it produced not the slightest alteration, either in his attitude or manner of going on. He still sat bending forward with his hat and cane suspended between his two hands, his arms resting upon his knees, his eyes riveted on the young lady's face, and his chair placed so nearly in front of her as greatly to impede the approach of any other person. Nor was his discourse less *exigéant* of attention than his attitude. Music, dancing, poetry, painting, metaphysics, and a score of minor objects beside, were all entered upon with so much grace, interest, and eloquence, that each appeared to be the favourite theme on which he best loved to ex-

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petiate. Nothing but politics and political economy seemed too great or too little for him.

Yet, with all this profusion both of subject and of language, Mr. Mortimer never spoke rapidly. If conversation may be termed an art, his manner might be termed artistique. His mode, indeed, of flying from theme to theme, stealing honey from all, and then, as if fearful that the charm might cloy, darting forth a sting from time to time, showing

'That he could an if he would;'

all this was masterly.

Yet, somehow or other, though there was occasionally pith and marrow in his discourse, which Plato might not have disdained to handle and examine, the generality of *men* liked not to converse with him; while probably no woman ever listened to him, who would not have rejoiced at the assurance of doing so again. Had the cause of this discrepancy been publicly discussed, the ladies would have declared that it proceeded from envy of powers displayed too brilliantly to permit any mistake about their superiority. And in this opinion there is every reason to believe that Mr. Mortimer himself would have joined. But the gentlemen probably would account for it differently. They might think, perhaps, that it proceeded in part from their not liking the assurance which seemed implied in everything the young orator said, that nobody understood the matter in discussion so well as himself—a peculiarity which was altogether lost sight of by the ladies, from a particular manner he had of managing the inflections of his voice, and the expression of his eyes, so as to make it apparent that his object with them was rather to persuade than convince, and to insinuate than assert.

Now Constance being a woman, and Mr. Mortimer exceedingly well inclined to make himself as agreeable as possible, it followed, as a matter of necessity, that she found herself perfectly unable to pay any attention whatever, either to her brother or his friend Mr. Marsh.

This was endured by the baronet for a little while, because, being quite determined that his friend Marsh should share in the abounding hospitality of Mrs. Hartley, he felt it necessary to make her acquainted with his claims to her notice, and therefore suffered his sister to remain in peace while he propitiated the lady of the house.

'I have been determined,' he said, 'ever since I had that conversation with you in the other drawing-room, Mrs. Hartley, to make you acquainted with my friend Marsh. He is exactly the man you'll like. His notions and opinions are as like your own as if they were cut by the same pattern. You can't help liking one another—that is impossible; and I just think it right to mention, (though I don't mean to say that I suppose that will make any difference in your opinion of his character,) but to a woman of your sense, it is right to mention that he is not one of the dressed-up fine fellows who wear their income upon their backs. There's many a more gaily-dressed man than Marsh—I know that well enough—and dozens that spend more in show of all kinds than he does; but he could buy them all out, Mrs. Hartley—one and all, take my word for it. The fact is,' lowering his voice, and speaking close to her ear, 'the fact is, Marsh has a devilish fine fortune.'

'Sir James Ridley!' returned Mrs. Hartley, almost in a tone of reproach, 'is there an individual in the world whom you could call your friend, whom I should not wish to call mine also? To you, Mr. Marsh,' she added, gracefully extending her hand to welcome him—'to you I need only say, that the value of Sir James Ridley's judgment is known to me.'

Mr. Marsh took the lady's hand, smiled, nodded, and very nearly winked, as much as to say, 'Yes, yes, all right—all right—we understand one another.'

'I told you so, Marsh—didn't I?' said Sir James, snuffing the air; 'I told you what sort of person Mrs. Hartley was—didn't I? Upon my life and soul, I havn't met with anybody whose opinions have struck me so much since I left college. I havn't, I declare to G—d.'

'Nay, nay, we will not listen to him—will we, Mr. Marsh? He will try to persuade us presently that we are two of the very wisest people in the world, merely because we have had sufficient tact and observation to find out that Sir James Ridley is something rather out of the common way. Alas! dear friend!' she added, turning towards the baronet, and speaking in a whisper, 'it is not the finding this out that is the difficulty. I will not believe that any one, however young, or however thoughtless,' and her eye glanced toward Constance—'I will not believe that *any* one can be ignorant of your superiority, though there may be some who are unwilling to yield to it.'

This was uttered with a sigh; nay, a little eau de cologne, which stood upon the table, was laid under contribution to bedew the handkerchief which she pressed to her forehead, while for a moment she seemed too deeply occupied in thought to speak.

'There are, are there?' said Sir James, following with his eye the direction of hers. 'Upon my soul, I think so? But I'll speak to you about that, my dear Mrs. Hartley, in a minute. I have brought my friend Marsh on purpose to make *her* acquaintance as well as yours; and now let's see a little if we can't break up that remarkable *tête-à-tête* yonder. I don't overmuch like her plant, I can tell you.'

Sir James, then taking a gripe of his friend's coat-sleeve, drew him across the room to the spot occupied by Constance and Mr. Mortimer, and having paused for a moment in examination of the poet, with the air of one who had a right to take the liberty, he said, 'Sister Constance, here is the most in-

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timate friend I have in the world, and I expect you will receive him accordingly. Joe Marsh, this is Miss Ridley, and I hope you will soon get better acquainted.'

Constance coloured a little at this address, but bowed civilly enough, as Mortimer thought, and said, 'I hope I see you well, Mr. Marsh.' But this done, she seemed not to consider herself bound to such an immediate prosecution of the friendship recommended to her, as to give up the conversation in which she was engaged, and therefore again turned her beautiful eyes upon the poet, as a signal that he might go on with what he was saying.

Had Miss Ridley delayed for another moment the giving this expected signal, had she uttered one single phrase indicating an intention of changing the subject of their conversation, or of intruding another person into it, the chances would have been very greatly against her continuing to hold for five minutes longer the place in his heart, head, imagination, poetry, and declamation, in which she had established herself, and which he began to think very seriously must end in marriage, if nothing peculiar happened to prevent it.

But not only was Mr. Mortimer satisfied by her evident intention of forgetting for the time being that any such person as 'Joe Marsh' existed, but he was gratified, in no small degree, by perceiving that a report which had reached him, relative to the authority exercised by Sir James over his sister, was altogether erroneous.

The quiet manner in which she had listened to all that her brother had to say, and then pursued the conversation he had interrupted, entirely satisfied him on that point; and loving sufficiently well the power which his good mien, and his *gai science* gave him, he even anticipated, with pleasure, a repetition of the baronet-brother's interferences, merely for the sake of seeing how completely his own influence would render them of 'none effect.'

Sir James, however, on his side, did not on this occasion contribute to the triumph of the poet by being witness to it. Having declared it to be his will and pleasure that his sister should immediately become intimately acquainted with 'his friend Marsh,' it never entered his head that any impediment could arise to the same; and having seen the young man safely seated in a chair beside her, he turned his back upon them both, in order to enjoy a little more of Mrs. Hartley's uncommonly sensible conversation.

He was not disappointed; the lady, though occupied, at the moment of his approach, in playfully arranging the well dressed curls of Margaretta's hair, left this, left everything, the moment she perceived that he was at leisure to listen, and once again lightly laying her delicate hand on his coat-sleeve, almost imperceptibly led him the way she intended he should go—that is to say, into the back drawing-room.

'Will you not be tired to death of me, dearest Sir James?' she said, raising a sort of deprecating look to his leaden eye. 'How I do torment you! But I cannot get on a single inch with this dear girl without your help. Will you promise not to hate the sight of me? Will you promise not to turn a deaf ear to all I say?'

'I shall not turn a deaf ear to you, Mrs. Hartley, you may depend upon it,' replied the baronet; 'for though I don't set up for a literary genius—I never did, even at Oxford, (though Marsh has often told me I might do a good deal in that way, if I'd give myself the trouble;) but though I won't do this, I am not such a bad judge of what's clever, and what is not, as to make any mistake about *you*. So you may trust to my liking to talk to you fifty times better than to most of the young ones. And then, besides your uncommon good sense and discernment, one has yet the comfort of knowing that you are not plotting against one's liberty.'

'You droll creature!' exclaimed Mrs. Hartley, placing herself on a sofa at the very extremity of the inner room, and making him understand that he was to sit beside her—'you very droll creature, what will you say next? No, truly, it is not *your* liberty I am plotting against, dear friend; but I will not deny that I want to retrench a little of that article from some others.'

'Retrench liberty, Mrs. Hartley?' said the baronet, looking as if he intended to favour her with a little of his political blustering. 'Retrench liberty! Why, d—n it, you are not a Tory, are you?'

'O heavens, Sir James! A Tory! I, a Tory! I, who perfectly shudder at the hateful word! No, no, let us shake hands on that point, my good friend; and depend upon it, our political feelings are in all respects precisely the same.'

'I am glad of that, Mrs. Hartley—I am, upon my life and soul, because I like you so much. I can bear anything, I can, upon my soul—I can bear just anything but a Tory; but that's what I never can nor will bear with patience, as long as I am above ground. O Lord! Mrs. Hartley, if you had ever been at Oxford, you would know what Tories were made of. D—d strait-laced, pragmatical puppies, who scruple not to interfere with the liberty of the subject, and the rights of a free-born Englishman, whenever their confounded discipline happens to be interfered with. Upon my soul, I am devilish glad you are not a Tory.'

'Dear Sir James, how I love you for your noble, honourable zeal in this glorious and most righteous cause! How I wish my Margaretta could hear you, poor girl! She is continually complaining that she never meets any one who expresses sufficient zeal on this subject. But, dearly as I love to hear you utter sentiments so every way noble, I dare not now indulge myself, for I am positively suffering under great anxiety about Constance. That is the point, my dear Sir

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James, where practical liberty is likely to be carried a little too far—at least I greatly fear so.'

'The devil it is! And that's unlucky, Mrs. Hartley, for that's the very point, you must know, where I the least approve it. If there is one thing in the whole world that I hate more than another, it is seeing a girl set up for having her own way. But as to Constance, you see, it is perfectly out of the question there, for I shall not suffer it in any way. It is my duty to see that she goes right in all respects, and that's what I'll do, you may depend upon it, though it may be, I think, just possible that we shall have one or two little trials of strength before she settles down quite as I wish. It won't signify, however, the turn-up of a farthing; for when I say I'll have my way, I'll have it, you may depend upon that, Mrs. Hartley. I shall just take care to marry her properly; and then, you know, my plagues on her account will be over—her husband must look after the rest.'

'How I love to listen to you! However full of fear and anxiety I may be before you begin to speak, I gradually recover my confidence as you go on, and feel that whatever you undertake you will go on with. There is a manly decision of character about you, Sir James, that makes me conscious, when I talk to you, that whatever is right you will *choose* to do, and that whatever you *choose* to do will be done.'

'Yes, Mrs. Hartley, upon my life and soul that is exactly my character—you could not have known me better if you had been my own mother. And I'll tell you something in my turn, and that is, that it is devilish pleasant to meet with a person endowed with such judgment as you have got. It would make you wild, I am sure it would, if you could hear how the old lady at Appleby Hut goes on. She does not scruple the least in the world to tell me to my face that I am a fool, a coxcomb, and a self-conceited puppy. She doesn't, upon my soul.'

'Poor old woman!' returned Mrs. Hartley, shaking her head, and then touching her forehead with her fore-finger. 'Poor old Mrs. Ridley! It is painful to say it; but do you know I have been aware, for the last year or two, that she is by no means what she has been; and if I had any doubt on the subject, what you tell me now would be quite sufficient to settle it. What a pity, poor thing, that she should have lost her fine faculties! for you must have heard that she has been considered exceedingly clever. What a pity! is it not? that she should have lost her faculties just when they might have enabled her to enjoy the pride and glory of having such a grandson as yourself!'

Sir James, who had listened to this speech with the air of one who hears some very interesting intelligence for the first time, replied with a look of grave and deep wisdom, his brow a little contracted, and his left hand sedately twisting his red favourites into curls—'I have no doubt you are right, Mrs. Hartley, and upon my life and soul I am very glad to have had the opinion of such a person as you are, and a neighbour too, who must have seen a good deal of her, upon the point. It is very strange that it never struck me before; but I do believe that sometimes a man does not feel the value of his own judgment, when he hears such things said to him as that abominable old woman sometimes says to me. You have no idea—upon my life you hav'n't—I only just wish you could hear her.'

'God forbid, my dear Sir James! For heaven's sake do not wish any such thing. You may depend upon it, I should never be able to bear it patiently, and I *might* be tempted to say things that you would not approve. I might be tempted to tell her that she scarcely deserves the blessing she possesses in you.'

'No, I shouldn't mind it at all, I assure you—I think it is just what she wants, and into the bargain it is just what she never gets. It is perfectly ridiculous the fuss all the people in the neighbourhood make about her. I am sure I don't know what they expect to get by it, for every acre of the estate is settled on me—and a beautiful estate it is too—without a sixpence of encumbrance except this tiresome old woman's jointure; for the fortune of Constance is in a capital good mortgage, that pays her five per cent.—lucky girl!—and worth looking after a little, isn't she? It is a sort of feather in one's cap, you know, to have a pretty girl with thirty thousand pounds standing at five per cent. to dispose of.'

'It is a feather, dearest Sir James, that no brother ever so well deserved to wear; and I have something to say to you now which will prove how sincerely I think so. We must not blame your young sister too severely for it, Sir James; but the fact is, she is thoughtless and giddy; I mean that she is ready to amuse herself with anything and everything, without sufficiently considering the very high station you hold in the world of fashion. Poor dear! she is still very young, and is hardly aware yet what it is to be sister to one of the first young men of the age. It is a very pre-eminent situation, Sir James, and so I shall take care to make her know. Her near relationship to you ought to make her feel that there are many things which might be perfectly right and proper for other young ladies, which would be greatly the reverse for her. For instance, now, I have learned by means of my dear Margaret, who feels the thing exactly as I do, that Constance has no sort of idea that there would be any impropriety in her appearing at the opera in a box hired for the night. Now this, you know, is perfectly monstrous. Fancy *your* sister being seen by all the élite of London, perched up in a box which perhaps was occupied the night before by Mrs. Fig, the grocer's daughter.'

'Oh, d—n it, Mrs. Hartley, that will never do!' said Sir James, arranging his cravat, and throwing himself a little sideways to

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get a peep at his recumbent figure in a mirror.

'Do? my dear Sir James! Good Heaven, no! I need not tell you, who are so perfectly *au fait* at everything connected with fashionable life, that the opera is neither more nor less than a *pierre de touche* for the scale of position, as I may call it, which settles the place one is to hold in society, particularly for a young man in your situation. It makes all the difference between being a leader or a follower. Do I make myself understood?'

'O yes! perfectly, Mrs. Hartley. I know all that as well as you can tell me, and I won't let Constance go to the opera in that way; I won't upon my soul!'

'I was sure of it,' cried Mrs. Hartley, clasping her hands with a look of almost ecstatic admiration thrown full upon him.

'Ah, Sir James Ridley, you may well say that I know you! I would venture to make any bet that there is no single circumstance of consequence, about which you could be called upon to act, in which I would not predict what your line of conduct would be. O, I was so sure of it! I said to Margaret this very morning, that Sir James Ridley would be equally incapable of refusing to his sister the necessary opportunity of being seen at the Queen's Theatre, or of letting her appear there in any box that was not worthy of having his name attached to it on the subscribers' list.'

'Quite right, quite right, Mrs. Hartley; at least as to the latter part—that, I mean, about not having my sister in a box that was not worthy of her, she being my sister. But, between you and me, there is no particular reason that I can see for her going to the opera at all, unless just once or so, for the sake of seeing it; and I dare say, amongst us, we could manage to have a box lent for that; or somebody or other might like to take Constance, because she's so devilish handsome.'

'She is very like you,' murmured Mrs. Hartley, in a sort of parenthesis.

'Do you think so? Well, I suppose she is. It is very common, you know, to see brothers and sisters alike. But what I was going to say, Mrs. Hartley, was, that I don't see any particular necessity for being at such an immense expense as taking a box, merely for the sake of showing off Constance, and for this plain reason, that I have made up my mind already as to whom I shall marry her to—so the showing her off would be of no great use, you see.'

'My dearest Sir James,' returned Mrs. Hartley, in a tone of much feeling, 'I love your sister Constance most affectionately. I feel that if she is not exactly your equal in mental advantages, she is still like you in person, and altogether a very charming person. But why should I scruple to speak frankly to you? Our long acquaintance as country neighbours gives me the privilege of an old friend, and I will therefore confess to you, with the most perfect sincerity, that my admiration and esteem for you at the very least equals my affection for her, and I feel that I owe it to myself to tell you, with the most perfect unreserve, my whole opinion upon this very important subject. To say the truth, I doubt if I should have alluded to the opera-box at all, had it not been that I felt my long experience in affairs of this kind might be useful to you. Do I make myself understood?'

'Yes, Mrs. Hartley, yes; I understand perfectly,' replied Sir James, looking very intelligent. 'You mean to say that you have got more experience than I have.'

'Exactly so. Oh! when shall I ever meet with one who understands me so thoroughly? Yes, Sir James, I *have* more experience than you, and it is this which gives me courage to tell you that I think, *for your own sake*, you ought to have an opera-box.'

'Do you indeed, Mrs. Hartley? I'll be hanged if any idea of the kind ever entered my head.'

'It might not be difficult, my good friend, to explain the cause why *I* have thought of it and *you* have not. I have great reason to believe that your estimate of your own consequence, in the distinguished circle in which you move, is by no means so high as it ought to be. Forgive my freedom, Sir James;—but, with your fine unencumbered estate, your title, your more than handsome person, and your remarkable powers of mind—with all this, Sir James Ridley, I *do* think that your name should be found side-by-side with those of the *very* first;—and I need not tell you how a first-rate opera-box is considered.'

'God bless my soul!' said the young man. 'It is very odd that I should never have thought of that before. It's true, though, true as gospel, and I am very much obliged to you, Mrs. Hartley—I am indeed. That's no bad saying about two heads being better than one; I am quite sure it's true when one of them is such a head as yours, and I really *am* very much obliged to you.'

'It is rarely that a woman feels disposed to rejoice at being older than the man she is talking to,' said Mrs. Hartley, with a charming smile; 'but at this moment I *do* rejoice at it sincerely, for I feel that my additional years are an advantage to one of the friends I value most.'

'The more I think of it,' rejoined the baronet, 'the more pleased I am that you have put it into my head, Mrs. Hartley; because I see now, as plainly as if it was written in a book before me, the sort of style it will give me. I shall go and see Laporte about it instantly. Whereabouts would you recommend, Mrs. Hartley? If I do it at all, I will do it well. I will make a few of our Christ Church men stare before I have done with them, or I'm very much mistaken. Must it be the pit circle, Mrs. Hartley?'

'I do not think that necessary, Sir James,' she replied. 'In my opinion, there is nothing that gives an air of more decided superiority than a large box. The pit circle is always, I think, dearer, in proportion to its real

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worth, than any other. No; were I you, I would be at least one tier higher. Perhaps, Sir James, the safest way to secure such a box, as I plainly see you wish to have—whatever you do is done nobly—the best way, I should think, for obtaining exactly the thing you want, will be for you to go, as you propose, to Laporte. Make him show you every box he has unlet, and tell the prices of them to the end of the season, and then just fix upon the largest and the highest priced among them.'

At that moment, Mrs. Hartley would have deemed it far wiser to have proposed Sir James Ridley's paying double the sum demanded for an opera-box, than to have hinted at his receiving any assistance from the funds of Constance. She saw that she had set fire to a train of liberality, which, if nothing checked it, was likely to terminate in an explosion that should astonish the world, and the marrying a girl without a sixpence might make a part of it. The last advice appeared to electrify her pupil by its spirited magnificence. He started up, and, rubbing his hands with every symptom of satisfaction, exclaimed, 'There is no use in denying that such a woman as you are, Mrs. Hartley, may be of first-rate use in giving one a hint now and then; and that is quite a different thing, you know, from listening to an old mad woman like my grandmother, or paying any attention to what such a chit of a girl as Constance could say. But whenever I *do* meet with real sound judgment and good sense, I'll never be above listening to it, whether it comes from a woman or a man.'

'My dearest Sir James! How like you is that sentiment! So liberal! so beautifully above every species of prejudice? But you must stay one instant, to answer me a question of great importance. You must tell me, dear Sir James, who it is upon whom you propose to bestow your charming sister, lest, by remaining in ignorance I might do or say anything which might tend to impede your wishes.'

'You may depend upon it, Mrs. Hartley, that I did not intend to leave you in the dark upon that point. The man is my friend Marsh, and he is a suitable match for her in every way, having a capital fortune, and not being in the least degree given to extravagance of any kind—not to mention what, nevertheless, ought to count for something, namely, that his opinion of me is as high as your own, Mrs. Hartley; and therefore I shall have, as I may say, the advantage of managing my sister, even after I have given her away to a husband, which must, of course, be considered as a great advantage for her.'

'Unquestionably!' returned Mrs. Hartley. 'Has Mr. Marsh ever seen her before this morning?'

'No, this is the first interview. But I must take him away now, let him be falling in love as fast as he will, for I won't lose an hour about this opera-box.'

On returning to the outer drawing-room, they did not find the grouping exactly what Sir James expected. His sister, by whom Penelope Hartley was now sitting, continued listening to the perennial and most delightful flow of Mr. Mortimer's eloquence, without appearing to remember that there was any other person in the room; while his friend Marsh, who had speedily wearied of the chair next Constance, had established himself at the side of Margaretta, that intelligent young lady having noted in her memory the place which Sir James had declared him to hold in his good graces.

On re-entering the room, the baronet paused at the door, for the purpose, as it seemed, of reconnoitring the party it contained; and, not approving the manner in which the different members of it had disposed of themselves, he strode to the place occupied by his sister, his brow contracted into a very ominous frown, and his spirit prepared to be as rude as possible, both to her and to the gentleman who so audaciously engrossed her attention, without asking his permission to do so.

Ere he reached their chairs, however, he recollected—rather vaguely, it is true, but still he recollected—having seen Mortimer in familiar colloquy with many of Lady Dort's '*first rates*,' as he called them, and this induced him to soften his aspect a little; for, in the career of pre-eminent fashion to which he dedicated himself, it was likely, he thought, that he might now and then find it convenient to have a few acquaintances more firmly established in the class to which he intended to belong, than his friend Joe. By the time, therefore, that he had reached his sister's chair, he was looking less magisterial than usual, and, after standing for a few seconds close to the two, said, 'Hashing last night's party, I presume?—An infernal crowd, wasn't it?'

These latter words were addressed distinctly to Mr. Mortimer, who had raised his questioning eyes to the intruder when he began to speak; and the dismay and indignation which ran through every vein, with a sort of quicksilver rapidity, on being so interrupted and so addressed by one alike unknown to fame, to fashion, and to him, was by no means ill expressed by the monosyllable 'SIR!' which he pronounced with his eyes fixed full upon the face of the audacious one.

The quick ear and the quick glance of Constance explained to her very plainly what was going on; and aware that on this occasion, at least, her brother was right, and Mr. Mortimer wrong—inasmuch as the former remembered the introduction of the preceding evening, while the latter had forgotten it—she said,

'I believe, Mr. Mortimer, that my brother, Sir James Ridley, had the pleasure of being introduced to you by Lady Dort last night!'

A flash of lightning does not more suddenly make visible the objects upon which it falls, than did these words of Constance—putting her eloquent new acquaintance in-

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stantly *au fait* of the blunder he had committed.

A multitude of elegant excuses followed, and the hand of the poet being speedily clasped in that of the baronet, the latter, of necessity, became one of the group, and the conversation, from being all that was copious, flowing, playful, and yet profound, became, as by the touch of magic, lagging, dull, flat, and unprofitable.

Mr. Mortimer's heart and head were at that moment throbbing vehemently, he being in the very act of imbibing a new and violent fit of love; nevertheless, the sedative thus powerfully administered sufficed to reduce the galloping current of his blood within less than five minutes; and, pulling out his tiny gold watch, which, from sundry prettinesses on and about it, looked very much as if it were the

'Trophy of some former love,'

the '*impressionable*' young man started up, protesting that he had forgotten an appointment, and must instantly break the fetters which bound him.

The succession of morning visitors which followed ceased not till Mrs. Hartley's carriage had waited nearly an hour at the door; and as Miss Ridley did not again suffer herself to be occupied by any one of them, she made a vast many new acquaintance, and received more invitations for the next few weeks than would have sufficed to render a whole year more than usually gay at Appleby.

CHAPTER IX.

AN AMBITIOUS MAN—A MAN OF SENSIBILITY—AND A VERY SWEET WOMAN.

Notwithstanding his wish to establish Mr. Marsh firmly in Bruton Street, the ardent mind of Sir James Ridley could brook no delay in accomplishing what was become, for the time being, the first object of his daily increasing ambition; and only giving Mrs. Hartley time, after the departure of Mr. Mortimer, to say that she should hope for the pleasure of seeing Mr. Marsh at dinner with him on the following day, he seized upon the arm of his protégé, and swung him out of the room, before he had half finished his speech about 'greatly gratified,' and 'hoping to have the honour.'

This visit had in all ways greatly interested Mr. Marsh, and, on the whole, had greatly pleased him too.

This young Oxford acquaintance of Sir James Ridley resembled his friend at least in one particular—he was ambitious. To neither of them, perhaps, did the feeling reach the elevation at which Milton places it when he styles it the

'Last infirmity of noble minds,'

for it certainly did not induce them to 'scorn delights,' and 'to lead laborious days'—at least, not in the sense in which the poet uses the word. Nevertheless, they *did* labour too in their way, and by no means without success.

Sir James Ridley and Mr. Marsh were great friends; but though their mutual attachment seemed equal, nothing could be less so than the degree in which they knew each other. Of Sir James Ridley Mr. Marsh knew everything that it was well possible for one human being to know of another. He was thoroughly and accurately acquainted with his rank, fortune, and '*standing*,' in every sense of the word; he knew as much about his estate, his family, his sister's fortune, and his grandmother's jointure, as Sir James knew himself, and a vast deal more of his faculties and qualities of all sorts;—while of him the wealthy young baronet knew considerably less than nothing, inasmuch as pretty nearly all he had ever heard concerning him was founded on the statements of Mr. Marsh himself, instead of resting on the simpler and somewhat surer foundation of fact. The differences existing between the two may be shortly stated. Sir James Ridley believed, on the authority above mentioned, that Mr. Joseph Marsh was the son of a merchant who had made a very large fortune, all of which was left without restriction or restraint of any kind, to his only heir, and only child, the said Joseph; whereas the facts of the case were, that said Joseph was the illegitimate son of a wealthy attorney, who could not, for many reasons,

'In dying bequeath to his son a good name,'

but who could, and did, settle five hundred pounds a year upon him for life.

The young man came into possession of this annuity at the age of twenty-one years and four months. It found him seated at the desk of a conveyancer, with whom he had been placed by his father after leaving Rugby, for the purpose of preparing himself for the bar; but no sooner did he feel the independence which the possession of it brought, than his very acute intellect sketched a plan for his own progress through life, which promised a more speedy and less laborious way to increase of fortune than that intended for him by his father.

He left the conveyancer, and entered himself at Christ Church, within a month after that father died: the thoughtful parent having stipulated that the first half year of the annuity should be paid to him in advance, the young man felt power both to will and to do. In exchanging the office for the university, Mr. Marsh was propelled by no peculiarly strong predilection for any of the blessings and favours which youthful scholars expect at the hands of Alma Mater; but he had other and not less precious projects in view. In the aristocratic society of Christ Church, he hoped to make acquaintance and form connections with men who might give him a helping hand through life. He knew he had wherewithal to live, and, by the assistance

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of his wits he hoped to live well. He had strong faith, which, if not saving faith, was faith in saving relative to the power which some men have of making one pound go as far as other men can make five: and, in starting upon this new course, he had one great advantage which is far from falling to the lot of all who speculate—he knew exactly what it was he intended to do. He intended to make everybody believe that his income was exactly ten times its actual amount; he intended to talk extravagantly, but spend sparingly; he intended to make acquaintance with none who were not as independent, and a great deal richer, than himself; and, lastly, he intended, with purpose resolute and firm, to marry some woman—maid or widow—old or young—handsome or ugly—who might supply all the deficiencies his father had left him in his means for making a figure and enjoying himself.

Sir James Ridley was entered at Christ Church the next term after Mr. Marsh had taken up his abode there, and it took but a very short time to convince the *ci-devant* lawyer that he never could hope to find any individual more admirably calculated to supply all that his heart sought for in a friend than the young baronet. Men whose dispositions lead them so to choose their friends, are generally supplied by nature with the talents necessary for securing them. Nothing could suit Sir James Ridley better than finding a companion ever ready to assert his superiority, to laud his talents, admire his person, and obey his will. And then, too, as he often told himself, it was a devilish deal better to have a rich crony than a poor one; for now he never need be on the look-out against being 'done' by such tricks upon travellers as poor devils were, of course, always trying at; so, before the acquaintance had lasted three months, a tie was formed which bound them as closely together as two such men could be bound. How their different talents worked together for their mutual gratification and advantage, may be seen hereafter, this sketch of the formation of their friendship being sufficient to show the terms they were upon.

The conversation of the two friends, on their way to the Haymarket, was, as it usually happened between them, made up with demands for applause, and determinations to make 'Joe' do this, that, and the other, on the part of the baronet, and responsive acquiescences on that of his friend, with an invisib e substratum of influence, however, which, being steady and incessant, was pretty sure of not failing in its object. In short, it was impossible that any two men could be better pleased with each other.

While they are satisfactorily pursuing their business with M. Laporte, we will follow another of Mrs. Hartley's visitors to the house of a friend in Grosvenor Place, where he called in the hope that he might find the fair mistress of it at home and alone, as he felt exceedingly in want of some sympathizing bosom into which he might pour the overflowing emotions of his own.

Mr. Henry Mortimer was a man crammed full, from the head to the toe, with sensibility. This is said with grave attention to historic truth, and by no means ironically. His original organization must unquestionably have been peculiarly delicate—but delicate in the sense of highly-finished and refined, not in that which signifies weakness. His senses were acute to a degree that rendered his existence a sort of check-work, divided between the darkness of agony and the brightness of ecstasy. The un-spoken language of his spirit, of his heart, of his soul, of his senses, was hyperbole—at least, had he breathed it into words, it must have been so classed; but inasmuch as all this vehement sensation was felt, and not spoken, it is hardly fair so to describe it, for how can sensation be said to transgress the sobriety of truth? Yet, mortals differently constituted would find it difficult to believe that a false note in an orchestra, or in the human voice, could cause him a degree of anguish that it would require similes drawn from the amputation of a limb, or the probing of a wound, to illustrate. Yet so it was. He would writhe under an evil smell as if it were a pang of the toothache, and the touch of a coarse, ungloved hand gave him a fit of the ague. Did any gross flavour, by some horrid hazard, trespass on the pampered organ of his taste, nausea ensued which seemed to him like the approach of death; and if his sight encountered anything strikingly ungraceful or deformed, he closed his eyes with feelings worse than faintness, and, for the moment, wished he might never see again, rather than see the like.

But to atone for this, when pleasure came, it lapped him in elysium; and the senses which, if offended, worked him such bitter woe, were as ready to make him quiver with delight as shudder with pain. In all of this there was little, or, indeed, no affectation.

Had this too perfect organization of the senses been accompanied with a proportionally perfect development of the higher mental faculties—had he reverenced the philosophy of Socrates a little more, and that of Epicurus a little less—these exaggerated susceptibilities would have subsided into a state more easily brought under control, and he would have been a far happier as well as a far more estimable man. But, then—he would have written fewer sonnets, which would have been a loss to the publishers, and fallen less often in love, which would have been a loss to the ladies.

Mrs. Gardener Stewart, the friend towards whom he bent his steps on leaving Bruton street, was a person whom all the world, or at least that part of it who had the privilege of knowing anything about her, agreed in denominating 'a very sweet woman.' She was neither tall nor short, fat nor thin; neither was she very brown nor very fair. No one could have dared to call her, or even to think

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her, very silly, and few would have ventured to pronounce her very wise. To have described her to strangers as beautiful, would have been likely to produce disappointment when they saw her; but to have called her plain would have been flagrant injustice. The *sweetness* so universally allowed to be her characteristic consisted not in temper, consisted not in talent, consisted not in any pre-eminent charm of either person or mind, but in a sort of harmonious mediocrity, which by never exciting great expectations never disappointed them, and, by keeping the feelings and the spirits tranquil, gave to the hours passed in her company, a sort of *dolce riposo*, which, for some reason or other, (not very easy to find out,) mortals very rarely permit each other to enjoy. The friendship of such a woman as this was a blessing of the very first order to a man like Mr. Henry Mortimer, and he had the good sense to value it accordingly.

Moreover, Mrs. Gardener Stewart, besides being 'a very sweet woman,' resided in an extremely pretty house, well appointed, quite in the right part of the town, and where frequent very small dinner parties were given, wherein no single object met the eye, the ear, the nose, the palate, or the touch, which was not calculated to bring pleasure to the sense. The cook, though a female, was an artist of the first cabinet quality. The well-varied viands and wines were selected with such delicate minuteness of care, and, as to the former, with such *appétissante* restriction of quantity, that each one might have been taken for a pattern, sent from the banqueting table of the gods, to teach some favoured mortals how to dine. Two butlers and five footmen had been dismissed within ten years because their shoes creaked; two more butlers, because upon trial, even by candle-light, they were not sufficiently well-looking; and three more footmen, because they wore coarse gloves. Not an article of plate or glass (the former all gilt, and the latter of deeply-cut crystal) was ever placed upon the table except in conformity to a general plan, which had for its object a union of symmetry and brightness. In the centre of each wall of the apartment hung one exquisite picture—exquisite alike in the beauty of its subject and the perfection of its execution—and each one illumined by its own concealed lamp. The linen was of damask that rivalled the softness of velvet to the touch; and for perfumes, Mrs. Gardener Stewart trusted to the skilfully-arranged succession of odours which streamed from beneath her golden covers.

When, in addition to all this, it is stated that the delicate silk curtains of this lady's drawing-room never admitted more of that vulgar article called daylight than exactly suited the various pretty treasures contained within it—that her carpets sank beneath the feet like newly-fallen yet tepid snow; that her couches swelled

'Deep with down;'

and that, through every season of the London year, the air was redolent with the perfume of the most delicious flowers;—when all this is stated, who can be disposed to wonder that Henry Mortimer found in this palace of dainty devices a sort of soothing charm, which greatly more than atoned to him for the absence of those dazzling flashes of genius which may sometimes be found under a ruder shelter, and beside a less polished hearth.

There was one other feature in Mrs. Gardener Stewart's establishment which contributed, as much as any of those already rehearsed, to its perfection. Mrs. Gardener Stewart was not a widow. If she had been, some of the lounging single men who so loved the amber twilight, the rich perfume, and the soft tranquillity of the atmosphere in which she lived, might have felt their peace disturbed by the idea that she intended to marry them. The existence of Mr. Gardener Stewart prevented this, and that, too, without producing any species of evil to counteract the benefit. No husband ever disturbed the domestic routine of his lady's arrangements so little. By far the greater part of the four-and-twenty hours of night and day were passed by him at his club; and the hour of dinner, which was that which he most frequently spent in his own house, being as agreeable to him as to the rest of the party assembled round his table, his happy wife rarely, or indeed never, saw him but with a smile on his countenance, and with the most amiable expressions possible falling from his tongue. They had no children, and plenty of money, great part of which was brought by the lady—a circumstance which, to do Mr. Gardener Stewart justice, he never seemed to forget, always meeting her with the most observant politeness, and as one who had done him a favour which he would consider it extremely ill-bred not to acknowledge.

Such were the charms, the graces, and the privileges of the 'very sweet woman' at whose feet Henry Mortimer loved to deposit a great many of his sorrows, some of his triumphs, and a very large proportion of his superfluous leisure;—and being such as we have described her, she well deserves the niche furnished by the conclusion of a chapter to herself.

ADDRESS TO THE TWENTY-SECOND DAY OF JANUARY.

THE BIRTH-DAY OF THYRZA FALLING ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE NATIVITY OF THE POET BYRON.

Thou sapphire in the diadem of Time,
Bright, blue-eyed morn!—illustrious ever be!
Splendent and glorious to my native clime,
But dearer, and how dearer far, to me!—

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Yes—orient morn—which midst the lesser fires,
Clustering their records of Time's histories,
Shin'st dazzling forth, as Lucifer aspires
O'er the dim glimmer of the Hyades!

Now Winter, girdled in his frigid zone,
In silence abdicates his sterile sway,
While this fair morn, we fondly deem our own,
Gives the first promise of a kindlier day.

Genius to-day, that spirit of a sky,
In mortal lineaments had human birth,
And the loved Byron lived, to glorify
Mankind the humbler denizen of earth.

For me he lived—but lived for all men too—
All times, all hearts, and ages yet unborn—
But Thyrza dearer, while to me but true,
In *mine*, all hearts—all times in *mine* alone.

Then glory to the sun, this natal morn!
Aquarius and thy dew-bespangled brow!
Welcome, as erst departed Capricorn,
But most, that memory which awakeneth now!

This chosen morn, Aurora as a bride,
Leaving her chamber in the azure dome,
Proclaimed her lord, Astræus, at her side,
And turned her chariot to her western home.

So earth to heaven in vernal incense rose
At Byron's birth, and smiled the infant year—
Lovely his chords! but, Thyrza, lovelier those,
Prophetic heralds of thine advent here!—

Where servient essence and where plastic thought
Obeyed his touch, as 'twere Apollo's hand—
Life's witness, thou, of all *that* fancy fraught,
Thy natal instant its Promethean wand!

For Phœbus blessed thee, and to thee assigned
'Zuleika's' tenderness, 'Medora's' love—
Thou breathing impress of the poet's mind!
So sprang Minerva from the brain of Jove.

And thou, a richer guerdon to those lays
Than ever chaplets wove on Pindus were;
Or Lesbian maidens, with their hymns of praise,
'Their eyes' blue languish and their golden hair.'

Or do we find thee sparkling on the earth,
Like some stray jewel from the pearly thread
On Juno's brow—as Iris, lost in mirth,
Was sportive binding her imperial head!

And as when Dian, mounting to the sky,
In Phœbe's likeness, wears a heavenly charm,
So shall the poet doff the man on high,
And thus be sanctified in *Thyrza's* form.

Then shall I gaze on thee removed above,
And past away are all our mortal years,
Nor dare approach thee, while mine eyes of love
Shall make a rainbow of my rising tears!

GEORGE RAYMOND.

THE BATHS OF LUCCA IN THE SUMMER OF 1840.

'Dove, diavolo! Messer Ludovico, avete pigliate tante coglionerie?'

CURD. D'ESTE AD ARIOSTO.

I BAGNI di Lucca consists of three villages, situated in a narrow valley, in the bosom of the lower range of Appenines, which are named Il Posote a Seraglio, I Bagni della Villa, and I Bagni Caldi. At the first, which is built on the banks of the Lima, are situated the principal hotels, the Post Office, and the Cassino Reale. The road from Lucca enters a narrow street of little mean shops, with lodging-houses above, chiefly inhabited by Italian and French families, crosses the Ponte over the Lima, passes through the little Piazza and another narrow street, and winds along, between the base of la Montagna and the Lima, amongst vineyards, acacia and catalpa trees, and passing various pretty villas for a mile, until it enters the second village of the Bagni della Villa.

I Bagni della Villa also consists of one street, but the houses are larger and better than those of the Ponte, and, above the street, houses and villas, many of them surrounded by gardens and trees, are built up the rising ground. Here most of the English congregate, and the rents are consequently higher than at the Ponte. The Villa, or ducal palace, is situated on a level space between the village and the highest houses; being more shut in by the mountains, the Bagni della Villa is hotter than the two other villages, and in autumn there are many more mosquitoes.

I Bagni Caldi is a knot of lodging-houses situated half-way up the Montagna, where the hot-springs rise, and which are mostly let in apartments. Many English reside here, though the situation is not so agreeable as that of the Ponte. There are three sets of hot and cold baths, on different elevations of the mountain, and also at the Bagni della Villa; all very clean, and nicely kept. A well-engineered carriage-drive leads up from the Ponte, and shady walks are cut in all directions over the mountain, and down towards the other villages. So much for the locale of the Bagni di Lucca. The surrounding scenery is most beautiful:

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the rich valley is surrounded on all sides by mountains covered with vineyards, intermingled with olive trees, or clothed with chestnut trees to the summit, and crowned with picturesque villages, each with its little church and campanile. Two clear and rapid mountain streams unite below the Ponte; cascades fall in every direction; in the rainy season every valley has its torrent, and even in the hottest weather the verdure and murmuring waters impart a refreshing sense of coolness.

We took possession of our casa the beginning of May. At that early period the season had not commenced, and only two or three English families had arrived. The weather was enchanting, not too hot for exercise, even in the middle of the day; the country was bursting into all the beauty of an Italian spring, and the good character of the contadini ensured our safety, even in our most distant mountain rambles; in the course of which we became acquainted with many of the peasants, and had opportunities of observing their manners and customs.

Our way of life is very simple at present. We rise at five; scramble about the mountains, or saunter along the shady lanes that separate the fields, till eight. We have excellent milk, bread, and tolerable butter for breakfast: three o'clock is the general dining hour, and in the afternoon we resume our rambles on foot, or on the little mountain ponies; the days are only too short for our various occupations, but we can scarcely complain of the short twilight as a fault, when succeeded by the glorious moonshine, and when every vineyard and mountain is lit up by the glancing fire-flies, or the steady green light of the glow-worm; at every hour Nature presents us new beauties to admire.

The fire-flies, however, have nearly made us forget our scanty dinners, which in truth are somewhat meagre. The Duke allows only one butcher to be established at the Ponte, and another at La Villa, who are brothers, and who pay five hundred scudi for their license. The sbirri, or gens-d'armes, are constantly prowling about, to see that no smuggled meat enters the village; consequently the two butchers supply us, how and at what price seems good to themselves; but, considering how entirely we are at their mercy, their conscience is marvellously tender. Meat of all kinds is six crazie the pound of twelve ounces, a proper quantity of *rigouessance*, or bones, being always added to make up the weight. The beef is almost always coarse, and young, though occasionally we have a good sirloin; the mutton, when *it is to be had*, is tolerable, the best coming from Pistoga; but we have, in general, to content ourselves with veal four days out of the seven. Fortunately, though far beyond the legitimate age of veal, it is not bled and chalk-fed as in England, and therefore retains some juice and flavour. The poultry at this season is bad, and dear; we have seen only one fat fowl since we came, and that strayed up by chance from Lucca. The contadini bring them for sale alive, and happening one morning to go down while the cook was bargaining for a couple, I found that the barbarous wretch had completely plucked the poor birds of all their feathers, except those of the wings. Formerly the Lima and Seretico were good trouting streams, but the great inundation of 1834, which did so much damage to this country, carried away all the trouts too, and now, a few barbel, and gudgeons and eels, with a strong muddy taste, are the only fish caught. Except potatoes, we have had scarcely any vegetables the greater part of the month, as the Pescian gardeners, who supply this place, did not think it worth their while to come so far till more company collected; and we had no fruit till about the 18th, when a few Alpine strawberries were brought from the mountains. We were surprised to find the potatoes so good, especially as the contadini use few themselves, considering them fit only for the '*animale*,' as they fondly call their pig, and grow them chiefly for the English. Potatoes were first introduced into Tuscany by the Marchese Capponi, who, having been in England, learnt to appreciate their value to the peasantry. He resolved to bring them into use amongst his own people, and for that purpose imported a quantity of seed-potatoes, which he planted on his own estate, notwithstanding the opposition and murmurs of the contadini. It is the custom in Tuscany for the signor to give a dinner and fête to his peasantry at the close of the vintage; and the Marchese took the opportunity to have a number of excellent dishes made, potatoes forming a part of every one. The contadini ate, relished, and extolled. When all had finished, the Marchese came amongst them, and told them that all those excellent dishes, which they liked so much, were made of the potatoes that they despised. A dead silence followed this announcement, and the Marchese retired. About an hour after, he was informed that some of the contadini wished to speak to him: when they entered, they told him that they were all sick, with gripings, &c., and that they were poisoned by the potatoes. 'You ungrateful scoundrels,' said the Marchese, 'begone; and if you are not all well, and at your work to-morrow morning, I will turn you all off my estate.' The crest-fallen contadini retired, and next morning all were at work, and every ache and ail had disappeared.

7th May. The weather is now very fine and warm. We have had some rain during the last two days, and vegetation has since been making rapid progress; the poplars and elms are in full leaf, the vines and chestnuts are coming out, but an oak, and the walnut trees near our casa, have still only small red leaves; the bearded wheat, (grano grosso,) and rye, the latter above six feet high, are coming into flower; the young hemp is coming up below the mulberry trees, and the scarlet clover and white lupins mixed together form a brilliant cross; they are cut

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green for the cows, and when in the morning we meet a contadina carrying home a load on her head, the whole air is perfumed.

In this country every tree is made productive; for those which do not bear fruit are made to support vines. The peach, the apricot, the pear, and the plum tree are in full blossom, not stunted and pruned as in the south of France, but stretching out their boughs in all their native luxuriance, mingled with the broad leaves of the fig-tree, and the delicate and perfumed flowers of the white acacia.

The contadini, especially those on the mountain, generally keep one or two small cows and a heifer, which they feed on the scarlet clover and lupine, ash leaves, and shrubs, and occasionally turn them out to graze on the patches of rich grass on the mountains. The milk is rich and excellent, and the butter, though white, would be equally well tasted if properly managed; but they do not understand a dairy here, and never wash out the milk sufficiently from the butter, which makes it sour: we tried to explain this, but we find them as conceited as their sisters in Dorsetshire. Besides butter, they make a substance of curds and butter mixed together, called ricotta, resembling the Scotch crowdy, and which they bring to us, neatly put up in baskets made of fern leaves.

The better class are, in general, proprietors of a certain quantity of land, cultivated either as vineyards if on the sunny side of the hill, or in grain if in the valley; besides which they rent land on lease from the great proprietors or signori, and a pezza, or part of a chestnut wood. The métayer system is strictly followed, and half of every kind of produce is delivered to the landlords, from wine and fruit down to eggs and butter. They live well generally, having soup and meat daily, especially in winter, cheese, and good home-made brown bread, from the flour of the grano grosso, with wine in abundance. In short, as they say to us, 'We have plenty of food, wine, and fruit; what we want is money, but that we find it almost impossible to get.'

The poorer classes, on the contrary, who inhabit the mountain villages, are very ill off. The men come down daily, sometimes four miles, to labour on the roads, &c., for a paul a day. They can rarely buy wheaten bread, still more rarely butcher meat; they chiefly subsist on chestnut meal made into porridge, and thin cakes, called netci, unleavened, and baked like the Scotch barley scone; they have a sweetish taste, and eaten with fresh butter are not bad, but are so heavy and indigestible, that one, with a little wine, will support a labouring man for a day. These contadini are employed to gather the chestnut harvest of the signori, and get two-fifths of the produce as payment for their labour. On this they subsist till exhausted, and then they must buy the meal from the fattare of the proprietor, who keeps it in stores for the purpose, and sells it enormously dear to the poor creatures. One day we met a poor old woman, who had come down from one of the highest mountains for the purpose, and was carrying home a few pounds in her bag, and that, she said, was all they had to live upon until their little crop of grano was ripe. The women spin hemp on the distaff, for household linen; work hard at all kinds of field labour, carry enormous loads of hay and straw, on their heads, up the steep mountain paths. Many of them are also engaged as servants during the season, by families at the Baths. Everything is carried on the head here: the women have a padded cushion, or fold a handkerchief into that form, place it on the crown of their head, and put on it whatever they have to carry, even baskets of manure for the fields. We were sitting one evening by the fountain on la Montagna, when two girls came down from the village of La Croce, with large copper pails to draw water. When the pails were filled, each folded her handkerchief, put it on her head, lifted her pail, full to the brim, and then without assistance, or spilling a drop, placed it on her head, and walked nimbly up the steps, and along the mountain path. I have even seen women, when so laden, spin on their distaffs, as they walked along. One would think that this classical mode of carrying their burdens would ensure an erect carriage and a graceful step: quite the contrary: the lower class of contadini are the most ungainly, misshapen figures I ever saw. Constant out-door labour makes their skins shrivelled, and brown as mahogany, and their features are not in general good; their shoulders are high, and their necks short. The bust is entirely destroyed by the wooden stays which, covered with scarlet cloth, or some other gaudy colour, they constantly wear from childhood. This frightful breastplate is in two pieces, which fasten under the arm, and are exactly the same behind and before, enclosing the form like a shell-fish, and pressing down and flattening the bosom. Add to this the short thick waist, the tight sleeve of their dress, and the unkempt and staring locks of their coal-black hair, and it may be conceived that one of these poor contadini possesses few attractions beyond her piercing black eyes. When out of doors, all, even the children, cover the head with a handkerchief, the end hanging down on each side; on week days it is of coloured cotton, but on festas, of white cotton or coarse tulle.

Amongst rich contadini there are some very handsome countenances, and not bad figures. They wear the proper French corset, and exceedingly well-fitting gowns, with sleeves as well plaited down, and flounces as numerous, as our own. Their hair is neatly plaited, tucked behind their ears, and thrown over their head; they wear an extremely fine embroidered tulle veil, which has a pretty graceful effect. Yesterday we walked behind three of these young contadini; their waists were as well laced in, their bustles as large, their skirts as full, and

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stiffly starched, and their embroidered muslin canezons as fine as those of the ladies around them; and as they walked along, fanning themselves, and conversing gaily, they really made no despicable appearance. Indeed the rich contadini, of all ages, pay great regard to the fashions. The other day, our landlady, Carlotta, was showing us her silk wedding-dress, and remarking that she had bought some braccie, more than required; she added, that it was very convenient, for 'when I was married, flounces were in fashion, and these bias tucks, and these flounces again,'—and this is a hard-working woman, who washes our clothes, manages a large family of children, and bakes her own bread, though her husband is a road contractor, and proprietor of a nice bit of land in valley and on mountain. The upper class of contadini are in general better looking than the women; we have seen several remarkably fine countenances. On ordinary days they wear caps of round corduroy, or dark velveteen jackets, but on festas there is a great turn-out of broadcloth and black hats; the cigar is always in use. Most of them can read and write; they are men of excellent industrious habits, and possess considerable wealth.

The poorer contadini, who live by daily labour, seldom, when at work, wear more than a chemise and a pair of short linen drawers; their naked legs and feet are dark brown, and their features coarse. They are extremely industrious, making their boys work as soon as they can carry a burden, and cultivating every little nook or corner near their cottage. All classes are kind-hearted and charitable, patiently supporting their own poverty, and maintaining their destitute relations, without a murmur, even adopting, and rearing amongst their own children, friendless orphans, without any prospect of compensation. The honesty and morality of the Lucchese peasantry are well known, and even the bad example of the profligate couriers, and bad characters that yearly swarm to the Baths, have not yet materially injured their good qualities. Either alone, or attended by a country boy, a lady can at all times take the most distant rambles, on horseback and on foot, without fear of receiving even an uncivil word. When thefts are committed, the culprit is always found to be a person from a distance, attracted here by the confluence of rich strangers.

The work which they perform, considering their very inefficient means, is surprising. A new road, with a high embankment and retaining walls, is now making along the Lima, on the Modena road, and a bridge building across the Camajoni to connect it. All the earth which forms the embankment, and the smaller stones, are brought up, from the bed of the river, in little round baskets, on the shoulders of boys from eleven to fourteen years old. The large stones are carried one by one on the shoulders of the men. We tried to explain to the Direttore, who superintends the work, the advantages of wheel-barrow and hand-barrow, but he shook his head, and said that 'their own way was the best.' The work is really making considerable progress, but a hundred and fifty men are employed, for five or six months, in doing what fifty English labourers, with their appliances, would accomplish in two.

They begin to work before five in the morning, and rest an hour at nine, at noon and four o'clock, then continue to work till past seven. In place of resting during the hours of relaxation, most of them dance and sing in chorus during the whole time, buzzaing, and making an incredible noise. The other day they procured a violin, and not only danced and sang during the day; but it being Saturday, when they left off work in the evening, a party of them who belonged to Monabbia, a village on the top of a mountain about four miles off, made the violin accompany them, and danced along the road, through the Ponte and up the mountain, with as much laughter, singing, and shouting, as if they had been on a party of pleasure. And yet these men had been working all day in the sun, when the thermometer stood in the shade at 78° of Fahrenheit. Their dinner consists of black bread, raw onions, and most commonly they drink water, though a few have wine. Sometimes a kind English lady gives them a present of bread and wine, and then the vivas rend the air.

One day a number of men getting incautiously on a board too weak to sustain their weight, it broke, and they fell down a considerable height from the wall. Several were hurt, but one who fell undermost was taken up senseless and bleeding. Immediately the most lamentable cries arose, and when we went to inquire the cause, we found tears streaming down the cheeks of many of the men, but none dreaming of giving any effectual assistance to the sufferer. The doctor was sent for, but he shook his head, did nothing, and went away. However, the man was more frightened than hurt, and after a few days resumed his work.

Some days after, several women came to work amongst them, but proved idle, trifling creatures. On one of the elderly men reproving them, and desiring them either to go away or to mind their work, some of the younger men took their part. Instantly sticks, stones, and staves, were seized, with cries and howls of rage, and a fight would have ensued, had not the lieutenant of police hastened to interfere. The storm was quelled as suddenly as raised, and in less than a quarter of an hour they were all peaceably at work again.

It is somewhat difficult to judge of the state of their religious feeling. The priests force them to keep all the festas, and to attend mass regularly; but, as far as we can judge, they have no great reverence for either. One day (the eve of a festa) we heard them laughing, and saying they must go to mass the next day, they did not know why. And

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being in the church one festa, while the procession was passing out, an old woman turned round, and gave us a smile of a very equivocal character, just as the cross was passing her. They fast regularly, however, every Friday and Saturday, and on the eve of many saints' days besides.

Diodate's translation of the Bible is forbidden as heterodox, but another translation with notes is circulated freely amongst the peasantry, with books of miracles and legends of the saints. Some of the old women have asked us very earnestly if we are Christians; on our apprising them that we are, they ask, 'How can that be, when you are not baptized?' On our informing them that they are in error, for that we are all baptized, and as good Christians as themselves, they express much satisfaction, and say that they thought that many of the English were not Christians, because so many of them live at the hotels, and neither go to mass, nor to any other church. The more intelligent amongst the contadini are extremely inquisitive concerning the different points of doctrine of the Protestant church, and many of them are surprisingly well acquainted with history, even with the history of England, and with English manners and customs. This arises from so many of their relatives going to England to sell plaster images. We have met several men now settled here in comparative comfort, who have travelled over Great Britain selling plaster images, and who invariably return and settle in their native country as soon as they have made a little money. Although constrained to follow this mode of life to obtain a livelihood which they cannot gain here, these wanderers are not esteemed amongst their countrymen, who call them vagabondi. Sometimes when prudent, they make handsome fortunes. There is a large house about two miles down the Val di Lima, which, with a considerable estate adjoining, belongs to a person who began life as one of these image-sellers. After making his fortune, he married the daughter of a Lucchese gentleman, and now lives very respectably on his own property.

We have engaged an Italian woman of the place, who is a tolerable cook, and a clean, tidy housemaid. Lucia is a wife, and mother of a large family, and the queerest little figure imaginable. She is below the middle size, and slenderly made; and though she says that she is only forty-five, her face is brown and wrinkled, and puckered up like that of a woman of seventy, but from the midst of these wrinkles her lively black eyes sparkle with good-humour. She never, even when out of doors, wears any covering on her head, and her shaggy grizzled hair stares out on every side, partly cut short, partly twisted up behind. Yet poor Lucia has had her own little romance in her time, as she loves to repeat it to us. She was left an orphan in her infancy, and at fourteen entered the service of the padrona of Casa Brettagna. She there loved, and was beloved by, the young Natale, and they would have married, but she heard that he courted another girl, and she quarrelled with him. However, after some time they were reconciled, and one evening she was walking with him, when they were caught by the padrona, who forced her home, and forbad her ever to leave the house, except to bring water from the well, or to follow her to mass. This continued for some time, when one morning Lucia staid too long at the well. On her return, la padrona reprimanded her so sharply that she lost her temper, and observed, 'If you think that I stay too long at the well, you had better bring the water into the house.' La padrona took the hint, and had water brought in a pipe to the house. Poor Lucia never left the house after that for seven long years, except to accompany the padrona to mass or to market, and she has pointed out to us the little grated window of the low room in the Casa Brettagna where she passed these dreary years. About the end of this time there was a poor friendless youth of twenty-two, whom the padrona took some notice of, but he was so poor that the woman who washed for the padrona's family sometimes washed a chemise for him out of charity. One day, by mistake, she sent in his chemise amongst the padrona's linen, and on the young man going to ask for it, she desired him to go to inquire for it at the Casa Brettagna. Lucia was at her grated window when he drew near; she told him that she had the shirt, but that it was wet, and he must wait till it dried. He sat down on a stone a little way off to wait, and Lucia continued to converse with him, when suddenly the padrona, who had stolen into the room unperceived, seized her by the shoulders, and told her that, now he had caught her, she must marry the young man. In vain Lucia refused, pleaded that she had never seen him before, and that she would rather leave her service, and go to her friends. The padrona told her coolly that she had neither home nor friends to go to, and that marry him she must. The padrona contributed some handsome linen, and some of the relations gave a few articles of furniture, and in three days after, in spite of her resistance, they were married. However, the poor girl was in such despair that she fled after the ceremony, and for eight days wandered about the country, refusing to go to her new home. The padrona followed her, and half by force, half by persuasion, induced her to return to her husband, with whom she has lived in tolerable comfort, for he is a good though a stern man.

19th May. We took a walk down the Val di Serchio, on the Modena road. This val is particularly beautiful, a mixture of the richest cultivation in the plain, gradually narrowing into a confined pass between high mountains, covered with remarkably fine chestnut trees. In sheltered situations, the vines are coming into flower. The peasants are preparing the ground for the maize crops called gran turco. It is impossible to observe without astonishment the immense labour and industry of the earlier inhabitants

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of this country.* For miles in every direction, the mountains are cut into regular terraces to the very summit, planted with vines where the exposure and soil are suitable, and with chestnut trees in colder situations. The chestnut trees would reach an immense size, if they were not lopped and pruned most cruelly, to increase the crop of fruit; but some ancient trunks in the Val di Lima, apparently many centuries old, prove what they once were. These trunks are entirely hollow, sometimes connected with the root merely by a narrow slip of bark, and often two pieces of bark form an arch, the middle of the bole being completely decayed. Yet such is the tenacity of life in a chestnut tree, that, in this state, strong new branches, covered with fruit, are thrown out, and a group of young shoots encircles the roots. Wherever a tree is cut down, a young one is planted in its place, carefully supported by a little wall of stones; and it is singular, that though these mountains must have been covered with chestnut trees for so many centuries, the soil never appears to become what planters call *sick*. The latest planted appear to thrive and grow quite as well as their seniors, amongst the roots of which they are placed in a way in which scarcely any young tree would thrive in England. When one surveys from a height these endless mountains covered with uniform verdure, the view is equally singular and beautiful.

Across the Lima, just above its confluence with the Serchio, there was formerly the Ponte d'Oro, somewhat similar to the Ponte Maddalena, and also built by the Countess Matilda; but in the dreadful flood of September, 1836, this bridge was carried away. A woman who lived close by, brought out her two children to see the flood, and, leaving them on the bridge, went into her house to fetch something she wanted. A huge walnut tree came hurrying down the river, struck one of the abutments of the bridge, and in an instant the whole fell and was swept away. The bodies of the two children were found two days after; they were the only children of an elderly couple; their mother died of grief a short time afterwards, and the father became mad. The stone piers for a suspension-bridge are now building on the site of the old bridge. About two miles higher up the Val di Serchio, the ruins of Ponte Faggiano, another bridge destroyed at the same time, with the bold romantic crags around, form a most beautiful scene. We crossed the river by a tottering wooden bridge and came to the Piano della Rocca, where a new road is making. Here we found several pieces of stone containing very perfect petrifactions of various plants. We met a shepherd and his wife belonging to Corregliano, who were driving their flock of ewes home to the mountains, after having been with them to Pisa, where he sold the lambs to the butchers. During the summer, cheese and recotta are made of the ewe-milk. Soon after leaving the shepherd, we met a very intelligent contadini of the upper class, who entered into conversation with us, and invited us so earnestly to his house, that we accompanied him home. The house was extremely clean. The lower part was occupied by his cattle, and we ascended to the first floor, by an outside flight of stone steps, to a kitchen with a brick floor. He opened a cupboard and took out some glasses, which, though apparently perfectly clean, he rinsed carefully, and then insisted on our taking some wine made by himself, and which was extremely good. This was followed by bread and cheese, the latter the common skimmed-milk cheese of the country. Our host whose name is Eustachio Sertini, did the honours of his house with the most unembarrassed politeness. He accompanied us some way, and we parted mutually pleased. We crossed the Ponte Maddalena, which appears even more extraordinary on a nearer inspection. The large arch is sixty feet high, and one hundred wide; yet, during the great flood, the people say that it was almost filled with water, the river rising forty feet, and covering all the small arches. On the other side we met a flock of remarkably fine goats coming along the Lucca road;—the forest of horns moving along had a singular appearance. They were driven by several wild-looking men and women, and crossed the ponte towards the mountains.

* The chestnut tree was introduced into Italy, from Spain, in the fourteenth century, by Paolo Guenigi

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VIRTUE'S SEAT.

A PLEASANT fable of the olden time,*
It is that places virtue on a steep,
By rocks abrupt, chasms and fissures deep,
From access guarded; dank, smooth weeds and slime,
Mock the ambitious feet that fain would climb
Untutor'd for the road, not bid to reap—
The bravest of rewards she loves to keep
For the rare friends that reach her hold sublime.
To that proud goal, that heavenly fair abode,
Leads up the narrow and unbeaten road,
Which some, scarce freed from nursing cradles, know,
By some sweet instinct prompted as they go;
Whilst with vexed eyes, and sadly changeful mind,
Some seek for toilsome years, yet scarcely find.

Whitehaven. W. T.

* Of Simonides.

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MR. JEREMY MAULE AND THE QUAKERESS.

Our artist was in his studio, a large and lofty chamber in one of those spacious houses in the deserted streets of Soho, which once were in the fashion, but now belong to a medley of foreigners, and musicians, and dancing-masters, and actresses, and other professionals. The sun was shining through windows encrusted with dust into a room, which had been treasuring up a stock of the same article for the last two or three months; but as the one lady who condescended to officiate as servant of all-work had undertaken to supply all the wants of five single gentlemen who lodged in the house, including breakfasts and dinners, and teas and suppers, (at least those of them whose funds allowed such extravagances,) besides the gentleman whose name adorned the brass-plate at the door, and his lady, and their seven children; it was only to be wondered at, that there was not a greater accumulation of that antediluvian article. The floor was covered with red baize, only half faded, and not more than half threadbare; an amber-coloured sofa, that had been clean washed not above five years ago, and still retained some of its original tint among the folds, one table, and two ordinary old-fashioned mahogany chairs, completed the garniture of the apartment, with the exception of the artistical appendages of the glorious art which the happy occupant of all this splendour possessed.

Such a list would be far too multifarious for us to venture upon; a few of the items are enough to frighten us. There was a number of pictures painted for the express purpose of making after ages quarrel for them; and a number more to contribute to the happiness of the present age. A great many ladies with the curliest of flaxen wigs and the finest of blonde caps, and the reddest of plump faces, and the stiffest of silk gowns; and gentlemen with the highest of collars and the most pompous of cravats, and the freshest of coats, and the whitest of hands, and the grandest of diamond rings, all painted to the life. Then there were figures, and models, and casts, and busts out of count, some without arms, some without legs, and a few of the angels disabled in their wings, to say nothing of broken noses. The largest of the pictures were arranged so as to divide off a corner of the room, and behind this mysterious screen slumbered the artist's bed—but that was a great secret, scarcely known to above two dozen of his most intimate friends. But we have left the most striking and magnificent part of the garniture of this domicile of genius unmentioned, though it was the first object that struck the gaze of the ordinary mortals who entered the painter's studio. This was a large, a most superbly large, old-fashioned stately chair, raised on a sort of dais, after the manner of a throne, and covered with red cloth. On this elevation, under the least adulterated of the lights that streamed through the medium of the dusty windows, did those favoured individuals who came to be transferred to canvass and immortality, assume their station, opposite to a large mirror, and from their reflected image on this glass did the artist paint his red and white, with his own cunning hand laying it on—we mean the paint and flattery—in very good style indeed, often very nearly staring the poor looking-glass out of countenance.

So much for the habitation, and now for the occupant.

The artist had far too good a taste to be florid and corpulent, and in vulgar robust health. He was quite young enough to care for his looks, and he chose a poetical style; that is, he was content, nay happy, to be as miserably thin as, to be poetical, an eau de Cologne bottle, and as sentimentally cadaverous as Dutch butter. His hair, with the help of balm and macassar, was long enough for a lady, and hung in a truly genius-like style over his brows and shoulders. According to his own classification, his long thin face belonged to the Italian school, and, to be in keeping, he wore his shirt-collar as wide open as possible, and went without a cravat—cravats being perfectly unclassical, none of the ancient statues wearing them. The rest of the artist's dress consisted of an exceedingly gaily flowered-over dressing-gown, with only a few patches of paint, striped silk stockings, and a pair of foreign slippers made in England, and scientifically slipshodding according to the laws of gravitation.

Our painter was half lying and half sitting upon the faded yellow sofa. His eyes were in a fine frenzy rolling, probably idealizing some immortal imagination. The day before yesterday's paper was at his side, and a two months' old magazine at his elbow. His table was strewn over with dog-leaved books and rough sketches, and complimentary letters written by himself, and sundries of all sorts, together with the remnants of his breakfast; a china equipage of beautiful variety, having no two articles of similar designs. The remains of a paper of soluble chocolate, a crust of stale bread, the head and tail and very fine specimen of the skeleton back-bone of a red herring, and a little blackamoor of a tin kettle standing, in a genius-like and bachelor-like disregard to primness, on the red baize that covered the floor.

The painter was roused from his revery by a knock at the door. He cast his eye round to see if things were in intellectual order, and then admitted his visitor.

The new comer was a little broad-set man, who seemed determined to take nothing that the world offered him amiss, not even poverty, for poverty seemed to be on very intimate terms of acquaintanceship with him, if not a friend, judging from a few of those signs and seals with which that amiable and agreeable divinity brands and marks her disciples. For instance, his hat was beaver-

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less and broken, his coat literally out of the elbows, and as rusty as old iron, his fingers peeping through the ends of his gloves, his stockings rather attenuated, and his shoes fractured, but destitute of surgical aid.

The stranger held out his hand with great cordiality, but the painter having caught an instant sight of these various insignia of indigence, was probably afraid of infection, and responded coldly.

'Ha! you don't know me? You don't know your old friend, Jeremy Maule—Jerry Maule?'

'Ah! is it you?' said the painter, his memory thus helped, and ashamed of forgetting any longer. 'Ah! is it you? Well, and how are you?'

'Let the world wag,' said Jerry Maule, 'and the world is a wag, whatever we may think. If it is cold, I take it coolly; if it frown, I laugh. At all events I keep in good humour. Getting cross only punishes oneself. But, I say, were your chairs made to sit down upon?'

The artist made a step towards the nearest chair, to remove the various burdens it was already bearing; but the stranger, much quicker in his motions, just gave it a hasty shake and threw its deposits upon the floor, and then drawing it towards the table, said, 'Nothing like being free and easy. Well, I am glad I'm in breakfast time, for I'm confoundedly hungry, and I was too anxious to see you to postpone my visit. I'm always in luck.'

The painter very reluctantly pulled a bell-string, of which he knew the wire to be broken; but his free and easy friend, not wishing to waste time, commenced an attack on the remnant of bread, declaring that it was a most delicious crust, and that he liked crusts of all things.

'Well, and so,' said Mr. Jerry Maule, looking round, 'you are getting on in the world.'

'I am rising, I hope,' said the painter, affecting modesty.

'Yes, I see,' said Mr. Jerry; 'yes, I see—you are a beau. By-the-bye, I once heard Thelwall trace the derivation of that word—beautiful—beauty—beau; that is you. Yes, I see, you sport silks and a ring.'

The painter looked as a great man ought to look.

'As for me,' continued Mr. Jerry, holding up his elbows, and twisting round his hat, 'I never cared for dress in my life—it is quite a bore, quite a trouble, always to be thinking of frilligigs and finery. I'm a plain fellow—plain outside and plain in; and you see I wouldn't stop to dress this morning, any more than I would stop to breakfast, I was in such a hurry to see you.'

The painter was not without a shrewd idea that Mr. Maule's hurry was for his breakfast; and his not dressing, because he had nothing to put on.

'You have some fine paintings here,' said Maule, looking round on the red-faced ladies and fat-faced gentlemen, and trying a little flattery on, "fine, fine!" And so they certainly were, though in a somewhat different sense to that in which the painter understood his friend.

'Not my best,' said the painter, 'mere every-day people—no mind—no intellect—no character. Had you been here a little while ago—but it looks like vanity—I have been almost torn to pieces—been painting *the* duke, and all the foreign ambassadors.'

Mr. Jeremy Maule felt very much as one may suppose a candle feels under an extinguisher; he felt himself very nearly extinguished.

Mr. Jeremy Maule, however, was something like a gas illumination on a windy night; if it was soon blown out, it was soon blown in again; and was he to be crushed down by a mere dauber—a man of his genius? No, certainly; so he took heart and went on again.

'I wish I had seen them,' said Maule, 'for I could have judged if you had been successful, though of that no doubt; but I had a good opportunity of a stare, because I dined with the ambassador lately, and the duke was there too.'

The painter looked at Mr. Jerry Maule with all his eyes, and took a mental inventory of his shabby hat and his rusty coat and his careworn shoes, and thought how well they must have assimilated with the splendour of embassies. He felt, however, that he was outdone, so he tried again.

'I think of having a sitting from the Queen. She has been pleased to approve my style of painting, and I am promised an opportunity when she is at the palace.'

'I would not go to her,' said Maule, 'I would make her come to you. If *I* were a painter of eminence, I would not paint even a queen in any but my own light. Not I. And, besides, you are too humble altogether. You ought to promise her a sitting, and not she you; and you ought to stipulate that nobody else should paint her. However, I have a few plans for bettering the exchequer in my head, which I shall soon offer to ministry, and I suppose I must submit to be presented. I shall probably have a private audience, and I can send her to you.'

'Thank you,' said the painter; 'but if your interview is not immediate, I shall most likely be in Rome. I am invited to go over and paint the pope.'

'Ha! ha! ha!' burst from Jerry Maule.

'Ha! ha! ha!' echoed the painter.

'Well, shall we both have done?' said Jerry. 'Do we understand each other now?'

'You shall have some breakfast,' said the painter.

Jerry Maule's appetite was rather capacious; but though his capabilities were great, he was obliged to content himself with the remainder of the soluble chocolate, and a shake of the dust out of the bottom of the sugar-basin, the very stale remnant of a half-quartern loaf, and the veriest scraping of butter. Jerry Maule would have been very happy if his friend had been a butcher, or a

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baker, or a grocer, or any of the professions that dealt in the solid aliments of life; unfortunately for his visitor's appetite, the painter dealt only in the ideal.

'And now what are you going to do with yourself?' asked the painter, as Mr. Maule collected the last of the crumbs from the table-cloth.

'I am not so ill-bred as to run away from you the moment I have got all that I can get,' said Maule. 'What are you going to do?'

'I am afraid you will find me bad company,' replied the painter. 'I am going to paint, and my mind is so absorbed whilst I am at work, that I know I am wretched company. I am always dreaming—always in revery—forget everything—full of my own imaginations—in the seventh heaven—never talk to anybody.'

'Never mind; I'll talk to you.'

'Never answer anybody.'

'Then you don't contradict. We shall agree all the better.'

'And what is worse, I have got a stupifying subject. I have to work away at the clothing of a stiff old quaker. A snuff-coloured coat, a snuff-coloured waistcoat, and a broad-brimmed hat, large enough for an umbrella.'

'I shall be amused above all things. When does the old chap come?'

'Why, not at all. Do you suppose that I submit to be bored with people whilst I am painting their clothes?'

'How then?'

'Why, thus.' And the painter proceeded to drag out, from amongst sundry litters, a small black leather trunk, and without the slightest regard for the feelings of the articles, or to the principles of neatness which they must have derived from contact with a Quaker *subject*, to kick them out of their depository without a shadow of respect; and there lay the very respectable snuff coloured coat, and the equally respectable snuff-coloured waistboat, and the immaculate broad-brimmed hat, all in sacrilegious disorder on the floor. 'I make the clothes sit to me, without being bored by the wearer; and so, if you like to be useful, you may put them on, instead of my having to attitudinize my lay figure.'

'Capital! fine!' exclaimed Maule, as he lifted up the dishonoured vestments, and proceeding to disencumber himself of the coat of which we have already pointed out the similarity to a great many estates, and a waistcoat that was growing elderly, began to occupy the vacant shell of the absent *friend*.

'I must have a few *feeds* before these fit me as they ought to do, to be a credit to the quaker's tailor; and what a tolerably thick head he must have, judging by his hat! Well, now I am a marvellous proper man! What a pity there is no pretty quakeress here to fall in love with me.'

'I expect one by-and-by,' said the painter; 'but pray give over strutting and admiring yourself.'

'Will she do for me?'

'Will you do for her?'

'I am like an elastic glove—I can fit anybody.'

'Well, get up; mount, and let me paint that fright of a coat as fast as I can.'

'The first time that I ever mounted a throne,' said Jerry Maule, as he ascended the dais, and sat down in the painter's chair of state. 'I hope it's a good omen.'

The painter took his brush, stick, and palette, and assumed his place before his easel, staring the representation of a snub-nosed, red-faced quaker out of countenance. 'Now are you ready?'

Maule attitudinized. 'There! there's grace!'

'Pho! nobody wants grace.'

'Well then, here's sentiment.'

'Don't be a fool!'

'The only thing that I could not be, if I would. Well now, here's humour—comedy.'

'Pho!'

'Broad farce.'

'I want you to do nothing but sit still, and be a little stiff.'

'I never could be stiff in my life—it's against nature. But I will be dignified. Now, here's dignity.'

'Sit decently still if you can, and bolt upright.

'Give me the poker there, and let me swallow it.'

'Now are you ready?'

Just at this juncture there came a particularly dignified knock. Some real carriage-company wanted to speak to the painter at the door, because they would not alight.

The painter, half flattered with carriage-company, half offended to have to attend them at their carriage-door, went half-smiling and half frowning down, leaving Jerry Maule as happy as a king upon his throne.

We have said that the painter did not copy from the real figure of his patients, but from their reflection in a good-sized glass, which hung opposite the great chair of state, thus in some measure sparing the blushes of the modest ladies and gentlemen who came to be stared at by the hour, and, for the sake of diversity, relieving the tedium of the time by staring themselves out of countenance.

In this glass the newly-made quaker began to admire himself. 'And is that very respectable, sensible, sound, well-to-do individual you, Jerry Maule? Why, with that coat upon your back, you ought to have thousands in your pockets, and under that well-beavered-hat there should be sense enough in the head to make a fortune. What have you been doing all your life, Jerry Maule, to be such a beggarly fellow? Look at yourself, and see how well respectability becomes you. And can you ever bring yourself to put on that scapegrace coat and that quarrelsome hat again? Can you ever degrade yourself into a low, good-for-nothing

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fellow any more, after having been such a "potent, grave, and reverend signor?" But is it you, my respectable quaker friend, that talks in this discreditable way? You in that snuff-coloured suit? Try again, Jerry Maule, and see if thy mother-wit will help thy mother-tongue.'

'Verily, friend, I am rejoiced to see thy old-fashioned face looking so well, and the garments of thy body in such good plight, though truly I must needs say that thy tailor hath mistaken thy measure. But no matter, a little of the flesh-pots will soon set all to rights, and make thy apparel fit thee in seemly sort; yea, verily, I must needs say that thou hast not in the world a friend more sensible of thy merits, thy various parts and aptitudes, than myself, Jerry; and truly I wonder not at it; for not to flatter thee, there is a something—a sort of a something in thy looks, that women had better beware of, Jerry. Thou hast an eye of thine own—and a tongue of thy own.'

Mr. Jerry Maule was cut short in the midst of his dialogue with his quaker friend, by the sound of an entrance; and looking down he beheld a walking automaton, in a drab-coloured silk gown, and a drab-coloured silk shawl, and a drab-coloured silk bonnet of a most enormous poke, and drab-coloured silk gloves. This living pillar walked perpendicularly into the room, looked round, and not seeing the painter, seemed to think that it would not be right to see anything else, and then stood as still as the monument.

Jerry Maule had always been a gallant man, and rather prided himself on his style of addressing a lady. He now took off his broad-brimmed hat with a prodigious flourish, and made a profound bow. The quakeress cast a look of horror.

'Friend, why dost thou uncover thyself? Dost thee follow the fashions of a vain world?'

'Verily the day is hot,' said Maule. 'I suppose a quaker may take off his hat when he is hot.'

'Dost thee call the body of *friends* after the scornful name which a deriding world fastens upon us? Verily, even that which men call politeness, maketh them refrain from that denomination in our presence, and thee art the first amongst our own people that I have heard copying the profane.'

'Jerry Maule, Jerry Maule,' said the new-made quaker to himself, 'thee hadst better think twice before thee speakest once.'

'Madam—' began Maule.

'Madam! Didst thou say *madam!* Verily thee savourest strongly of the profane. Dost thee call any of the flesh master or mistress, sir or madam! Take heed lest thou be not an offence unto thy people! Like unto them that go about with lies!'

'Upon my word—' again began Jerry Maule, bewildered out of all recollection of his own identity, and entirely forgetful of anything like consistency with his coat. 'Upon my word—'

The quakeress actually screamed. 'Dost thee swear!—swear!'

Maule put his hands in his pockets with a reckless sort of despair. 'Jerry Maule! Jerry Maule, what a ragamuffin thee art!' and then Jerry looked in the painter's great glass, and seeing there a most respectable brown suit, and most unblemishable broad-brimmed hat, he again soliloquized himself.

'Nay, verily, thee art not such a ragamuffin neither. Thee art a respectable well-to-do. Try thy luck again with thy fair sister, (by-the-bye, she is as brown as a badger!) and see if thou canst not make thy tongue sort with thy garb. But it is such a bother for a polite man to strip his manners of all their embellishments. Here must I neither bow nor bend, nor sir nor madam it, and how can I contrive to honey and sugar her without these little graceful divertisements? I wonder how the real lubber that might possibly have fitted himself into this coat would have acquitted himself. How do quakers flatter? But let me wait a little, and try to get out of my own hobble before I get her into one.'

'Swear!' repeated the quakeress. 'Thee didst swear! Let thy yea be yea, and thy nay, nay!'

'Oh! oh!' ejaculated Jerry.

'What, dost thee ail?' asked the quakeress.

'O my head! my head!'

'Dost thee suffer?' said the fair—no, brown quakeress.

'Dreadfully! acutely! excruciatingly!'

'Wilt thee take my salts?' And thereupon the quakeress disinterred from the depths of her capacious pocket a large ungainly bottle.

'Thank you, ma—hem!' said Maule.

'Art thee better?'

'Verily thy vinaigrette hath wrought wonderfully upon me. I am almost myself again.'

'I am rejoiced truly; but verily thy illness made thee utter strange unlawful things.'

'I am exceedingly distressed, amazed, and confounded. But when I am in these fits, my understanding knoweth not what my tongue uttereth. But I hope I did not frighten *thee?*' and Jerry began to try what a tender look would do.

'Thee didst speak after the fashion of the profane world. Thee didst name our people after the mocking way of the scorners. Thee didst call us *quakers.*'

Jerry lifted up his eyes, clasped his hands, and groaned.

'Thee didst call me *madam.*'

'You—thee, I mean! could I even in insanity call thee such a name!'

'And thee didst *swear!*'

Maule hid his face in his hands—it was to hide a laugh.

'Nay,' said the quakeress, 'take comfort. Thee didst it not in unbelief, but in unwittingness.'

'Canst thee forgive me?' said Jerry.

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'Nay, hush, thou art getting bad again. It is not one of the flesh to forgive thee.'

'I don't think I know what I am doing,' said Jerry, rather naturally.

'Nay, thee hadst better try to forget,' said the quakeress.

'I can't do that,' said Maule; and something like a blush on the cheek of the lady made him suspect that quakeresses understood inuendos almost as well as women in flounces and feathers.

'Thee must divert thy mind, and then thee wilt be right again. Come, we will look at these gaudy damsels decked in divers colours, though, verily, the flowers of the field are garnished and painted beautiful—'

'To look like—' Maule rather sighed than said; and though he did not utter the little word *you*, yet he was fast finding out that the drab-coloured lady understood implications.

'What thinkest thee of this flaunty creature? verily her eyes are like the coals, and her cheeks are like the fire.'

'Verily I like not bold black eyes. Grey ones are softer. And for her red cheeks, I know pale ones that please me better.'

Of course the quakeress had little grey eyes, and no vermilion that could be sworn to in her cheeks.

'What thinkest thee, then, of this bold woman in the vain velvet, with her long dangling ear-drops, and turban like the heathen Turks, and the flaunty bird with the long tail standing up so high?'

'Verily it seemeth to me, from her ungainly breadth, that she loveth the flesh-pots too well. Mine eye liketh to look upon a tall lady'—Maule cast his eye on the quakeress—'and rather slim; and for the velvet and the gold, I know a friend who looketh better in her plaited cap and her—let me see—yes—yea—drab-coloured silk gown—than any other in satin and embroidery.'

The quakeress looked modestly down upon her own drab-coloured dress.

'Thee and me will look at thy picture now. Has our painter friend made thee to thy liking as to similitude?'

'Now I am caught!' thought Maule. 'Why, you see, ma—hem!—that I am rather altered since this picture was begun. I have had two or three of those illnesses which you—which thee witnessed but now, and they have made my corporeal substance fall away, till I am, you may see, considerably smaller than my clothes. So perhaps the likeness is not quite so strong as it might be.'

'I see thou hast altered,' said the quakeress; 'thee art much thinner than thy picture, but still it is a fair work, and much resembleth thee.'

Maule breathed again.

'Verily it was in my thoughts that the painter-man had not done his work meetly; but if thee thinkest so—'

'Truly he hath somewhat mistaken the colour of thine eyes, and thine hair is not altogether the same, but still it has much of thy look.'

'The ugly animal!' thought Maule.

'Thee art ill again,' said the quakeress.

'Yes, worse than ever,' thought Maule. 'Here I am, going on swimmingly, in a fair way of making my fortune, and in about another minute and a half my precious friend, Master Brush, will come up and spoil all again. I might, if fortune favoured me, prosecute this matter, and make something by the speculation, but not without this admirable appendage, this brown coat, and this delectable hat. How can I secure them? Precious treasures! how can I make them mine? Can I borrow them? No—nobody would trust me with them—nobody would lend. Can I beg them? No! I have no money; and for credit—ah, my name is not in the best odour! Can I steal them? Ah, let me see.'

'Thee art worse?' said the quaker-lady, somewhat tenderly; of course, only the tenderness of charity.

'Air! air!' exclaimed Maule. 'O, let me have air!'

The quakeress endeavoured to open the window—but all in vain.

'I will try—to get down—into the air,' gasped Maule.

'Thee mayest lean upon me,' said the tall, thin, drab-coloured quakeress.

'Thank thee kindly, friend—thank thee kindly;' and Maule did lean rather unmercifully upon the poor lady's arm.

'Take care of the stairs; thou dost stagger.'

'I shall be—better—when I am in the air.'

And so went the benevolent lady and the invalid gentleman. Never had Maule felt himself so thoroughly nervous as he did in this progress down into the street, being full of the most terrible apprehensions of meeting his friend the painter; but they did get safely down, and there they saw the limner in his long dressing-gown and his foreign slippers and silks, and his open shirt-collar, flowing sentimental hair, holding up the whitest and thinnest hand imaginable to see the sunlight through its red transparency, and looking as handsome as he possibly could in the eyes of a young, laughing, mischievous-looking, black-eyed girl, with the finest colour, and longest curls imaginable.

'Oh!' groaned Jerry Maule. 'Thee seest the vanity of the vain. Let thee and me walk on. I shall be better by the time that I have turned the corner of the street.'

It was the twilight of the finest summer evening in the world. The shadows of the earth were fast losing their identity, becoming less and less particular in their outlines, and casting themselves like a soft sleepy mantle for rest upon the fields and valleys, and over the habitations of man. Everything would have been very delightful, only that it was intolerably dusty and oppressively hot. Under this fast-descending veil of night Jerry Maule took courage to venture forth in his stolen apparel, and to reconnoitre the dwelling of the brown quakeress. He found it just such as heart could have desired

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—the nicest little snuggery; such a warm corner for his slippers and cigar in winter —such a nice arbour for his bottle of sherry wine in the summer—a cottage so delightfully substantial, so well built, so well painted, apparently so well furnished; the garden so neat, so trim, so well trained, so well gravelled, so well rolled.

'Ah, Jerry Maule, Jerry Maule, if thou canst but manage to pitch thy tent here, adieu to all real troubles, all caring for the why and the wherefore, and as for fanciful fooleries, a fig for them.'

Thus meditated Jerry as he proceeded to take a survey of the dwelling and its capabilities, making comparisons between his own reckless, roving, day-at-a-time sort of living, and the respectable respectableness of the brown quakeress, and making all sorts of resolutions that he would go into partnership with her as speedily as possible; and whilst thus musing he wandered round to the back of the house, which opened into some fields in the suburbs of our great town, and perceiving that a small gate communicated with the quakeress's garden, he thought he would see if it were unfastened, and finding it only on the latch, told himself that there could be no great harm in just peeping into the interior, especially as he was only very slightly anticipating his rights as a master; and having thus admitted himself, finding all quiet, and seeing lights glancing in the windows, he felt strongly tempted to treat himself with a closer view of his own future dwelling, a very natural inclination nobody can doubt, and, never having been in the habit of resisting temptations, he forthwith proceeded to indulge himself.

With a stealthy step Mr. Jerry Maule proceeded towards the house, only treading down some half dozen of choice carnations, and a few expensive Dutch tulips, which, had the quakeress seen and known, he might just as well have trampled on her heart, or her best silk gown. Mr. Jerry Maule found that the back of the house was not quite so quiet as the front. The frizzling of ham and the half-stifled song of the servant girl came in rich harmony upon his ear, though, as a matter of taste, we believe that he preferred the music uttered by the dead animal to that which breathed from the lips of the living one. Certainly the odorous combination of the fragrance of ham and green peas, with which the air was redolent, came over his soul and senses with a rush of richer luxury than could an atmosphere of roses and eau de cologne.

Now, whether it were the seductiveness of the fragrance, or the syren-like winningness of the song, we presume not to determine, but certain it is that Mr. Jeremy Maule found himself drawn, by an irresistible attraction, nearer and nearer, over bed and over border, over fence, over flower, until he found himself face to face with the kitchen window, and his eyes, without a legal introduction, began to make acquaintance with the captivating interior. Never were brass kettles and dish covers before of such killing brightness, never was there so clean a hearth, so bright a fire, so fat a cat; and then the dear delicious ham, and the loves of green peas! What could a man do who had dined with Duke Humphrey, and had never found it bad for his health to eat as good a supper as he could get?

Whilst Jerry thus stood, thinking on the moment whether or not it would be desirable to make love to the maid who was singing, and thus secure the epicurean's best morsel, a voice not quite so gracious as that which had sympathized with him in the morning, broke upon his ear—'Rebecca!' But the maid, being at the moment deaf to all music but her own, sang on

> 'Nobody coming to marry me—
> Nobody coming to woo!'

'Rebecca, hold thy filthy noise!' exclaimed the quaker mistress, and Jerry saw *his* mistress standing with all the symptoms of a very laudable indignation at the folly of a maid who could dare either to say or sing that 'nobody *was* coming to marry.'

'Rebecca, hold thy filthy noise!'

The maid instantly turned round, and in doing so caught the glitter of Maule's longing eyes, and the outline of his figure through the window, and the quakeress catching at the same moment a glimpse of the same object, they both began to scream in the finest manner imaginable, almost as loud as Grisi, though not perhaps in quite so grand a style of composition, and whether after the German or Italian school, we know not.

Maule's first thought, as the maid and the mistress ran thus shrieking away, was to leap in and secure his supper; but he instantly rejected this idea in a most magnanimous manner, and running round to the front of the house with all imaginable speed, got comfortably there in time to receive the brown quakeress, who came rushing out, followed by the maid, screaming not less than ten thousand murders.

'My dear creature'——

'Oh! oh! oh!' and the mistress seized tight hold of the one arm whilst the maid clutched as tightly at the other.

'My dear madam! what *is* the matter?'

'A man! a man!' screamed the mistress.

'A man! a man!' screamed the maid.

'Wilt thou tell me, friend, what aileth thee and thy handmaiden?' asked Maule, once more timely remembering that his coat required some consistency.

'A spoiler!' gasped the mistress.

'A thief!' panted the maid.

'When! where!'

'In the garden,' said the maid.

'Nay, perhaps he be already in mine habitation,' said the mistress, 'taking the spoil.'

'I will go and kill him,' said Maule.

'Nay, nay, that may not be,' said the quakeress; 'there may be no shedding of blood among our people. In thy zeal for me thou forgettest that we may be smitten, but that we must not smite.'

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'Nevertheless,' said Maule, 'if the spoiler cometh and taketh thy goods by violence, he might as well take mine. Let me go, I pray thee.'

'Verily I am loath,' said the mistress; 'thou mayest come to harm.'

'For thy sake,' said Maule, tenderly.

'The evil man may smite thee.'

'It is for thy sake,' said Maule.

'May slay thee,'

'For thy sake. Fear not,' said Maule. 'I was never a coward. These rogues know where they may venture. They can smell courage as well as a crow can smell gunpowder.'

The quakeress looked approvingly. All women admire courage.

'If I were but to throw in my hat, it would frighten them. Let me go and save thy substance from the evil-minded, from the thief and the robber. Why should thy silver spoons be melted down, and thy goodly tankards carried away?'

'I am a lone woman,' said the quakeress.

Whereupon Mr. Jeremy Maule pressed the long, thin, bony fingers, as though he would have said that it should be her own fault if she were so long; and without asking further consent, led the way into the house, the mistress and the maid still pinioning either arm. Maule went into both the parlours, and fixed his eyes on the comfortable home which he felt assured he was going to take ready furnished—the cozy corners, the mahogany chairs, the Brussels carpets, the delightful hearth-rugs. Neither was Jerry content with this inspection, nor could he feel that his whity-brown mistress was safe until he had peeped into every cupboard, and inspected every corner. Nothing could be more satisfactory than Maule's investigation. His inventory included everything that could make his home comfortable, from the very coal-hole crammed to repletion with coals, up to the summit of the tallest chimney-top, from whence their smoke proceeded.

'My dear friend,' said Maule, when they had returned to that comfortable parlour in which was laid the whitest of white tablecloths, but alas! implements only for one; 'thou art safe for this night, but thee shouldst not—thee shouldst not live by thyself.'

'What can I do?' said the quakeress, sentimentally. 'I am a lone woman.'

'Thee shouldst not live by thyself; thee wilt be robbed.'

The quakeress sighed.

'Thou mightest be murdered.'

The quakeress shrieked.

'And then what would become of me?'

The quakeress smiled.

'Thee shouldst make a second choice. It is not good to live alone. Some one who might take care of thee—as I would have done to-night. Thee hadst better do it. Thee wilt assuredly be in the same jeopardy again.'

The quakeress groaned.

'And now I must leave thee, I suppose, to thy evening meal. Take care of thy spoons. It may be that the rogues may watch my departure—but I leave thee to thy supper—and then return upon thee again. But fear not: they may rather choose to assault thee at another time. So pray eat of thy food with a goodly appetite.'

'Wilt thee stay and partake?'

'If thee shouldst hear them returning, and trying to break into thy habitation, do thou and thy damsel shriek—shriek loudly: it may be that some wayfarer may hear, like unto myself. But now, I bethink me, there is small hope of that; thy dwelling is a mile from the public road.'

'Nay, friend, but a quarter.'

'Well, a quarter, or half, or a mile, just as thou pleasest. Doubtless it might so happen that somebody should hear. For mine own part, I should never have bethought me of approaching thy habitation only—that—I had seen a friend that my heart would fain have me see again. Canst thou guess who?'

The quakeress began to twiddle her thumbs.

'Had I better go?' said Maule.

'Thou hadst better stay,' said the quakeress.

So Maule stayed, and did his best at the ham and green peas, and in making love to the quakeress.

After this lucky introduction, Maule was a constant visitor—generally in the evening, both because it suited Mr. Jerry better, on account of some nervous twitches which he occasionally felt about his brown coat and his broad-brimmed hat, and because the quakeress was likewise exceedingly apprehensive that her nocturnal depredators should return again. So Maule went every evening to comfort and protect her, and to take every possible care of her body, including her heart.

So, of course, Maule prospered in his wooing. Novelty supplies wings to youth; habit chains to age. O yes, habit is a famous thing, and day by day adds a link to the willing bondage. As duly as the evening came, it found the white table-cloth spread, and now always for *two*; and Maule took his station opposite to the quakeress as regularly as a soldier falls into his place on drill, and went through the exercise of his knife and fork with great skill and extraordinary zeal. Everything went on as regularly as clockwork, even to the matter of the love-making, which always came on immediately after the removal of the cloth, and when the quakeress had mixed him a glass of brandy and water, which Jerry assured her had been prescribed for the good of his health.

There was only one thing that Jerry particularly shrank from in the arrangements of the quakeress's house, and this was the regular reading of the Bible. At a certain hour of the evening, the quakeress sat bolt upright on one chair, Maule bolt upright on another,

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and the maid bolt upright on a third; and then the lady read a chapter with a fine nasal twang, and the maid tried not to fidget, and Maule tried not to hear; and when it was done, they all three continued as motionless as matter that has a moving power within can possibly manage to be for about ten minutes, waiting for some particular illumination of mind; and as these illuminations of mind never came to Maule, and never came to the maid, and now (alas for people being in love!—what other inspiration can enter in!) seldom or never to the mistress, though formerly they used to be very frequent—why, then, after sitting perpendicularly for about these ten minutes, the maid used to go back to the kitchen, Maule to making furious love, and the mistress to considering whether she liked it or not.

On one of these evenings in question, when the planets had been most propitious, the whity-brown quakeress had actually blushed the colour of an orange lily, and had just uttered '*Yea*' in a tone like the lowest whisper of a bagpipe, and Maule was in such superior ecstasies that he actually ate double the quantity of an ordinary supper—though that might be because it was doubly well cooked—that, after satisfying his appetite, he began to think that it would be as well to finish the whole affair as speedily as possible, so that he need not have the trouble of going backwards and forwards to his miserable, mean, comfortless lodging, and enjoy breakfasts, luncheons, dinners, and teas, as well as suppers, at the expense of the quakeress, seeing that she provided them so well.

'To-morrow,' said Maule, tenderly. 'Let it be to-morrow.'

'Nay, verily,' said the quakeress; 'thee art in unseemly haste.'

'The next day?'

'Nay, nay. Thee forgettest. Thee and me must consult our people.'

Maule groaned.

'Nay, nay, be not troubled in spirit.'

'Troubled! I am in a—a—palpitation!'

'Jacob tarried seven years for Rachel, and canst thee not wait a few years? Surely thee canst, if thy spirit really cleaveth unto mine.'

'A few years!—I shall go distracted.'

'Nay, nay. Thee speakest like the children of vanity. But comfort thee! It may be that thee mayest not have to tarry more than one.'

'More than one! One! I might as well wait a century.'

'Thee dost affright me!'

'I shall die.'

'Nay, thee wishest to kill me now.'

'I shall kill myself.'

'Nay, nay, thee art beside thyself! Thee art mad! Thee art ill again!'

'I tell you, madam'—

'Madam! Nay, now I know thou hast one of the seasons of thy malady upon thee.'

'I shall never be myself again till thee and me are one.'

'Well, well; only be patient.'

'Patient! I will go away into some unknown hemisphere, if thee will not have me at once.'

'Nay, thee shalt not go away.'

'Then do not thee trifle with me. Shall it be to-morrow?'

'Nay, that would be an indecorous haste; but if thee canst manage it the next day, or the day after—'

'O you dear creature!' exclaimed Maule.

'Nay, nay: thee speakest after the manner of the profane.'

'It is because thee hast made me beside myself with joy. Verily I could dance and sing.'

'Hush thee! hush thee! Thee art after the manner of the world again. And, hark thee! dost thee not hear that it is the tenth hour?'

Maule sat down, and emulated the post or the poker. The maid came up and imitated him. The whity-brown quakeress opened the leaves of the old venerable family Bible, and read with an empty voice, for her heart was full of other things. Her own understanding did not take in the ordinary meaning of the words; but on Maule, who tried to divert his attention from them, and to whom they were wholly unpalatable, they fell and fastened with something of their own mighty power. The nasal twang of the quakeress ceased. She looked down—the maid looked down—Maule looked down, and then he saw himself as in a mirror;—his idleness, his dissipation, his falsehood, his duplicity; and, with the denunciations of divine vengeance still ringing in his ears, could he consummate an act of the vilest hypocrisy? Then came a mist before his eyes, and a singing in his ears, and a knocking of his knees together; and he knew something of what the condemned criminal must experience whilst he feels the thrill of the hangman's hands fastening the rope around his neck.

Those ten minutes of the life of all created things had passed away, the perpendicular mistress closed the book, the pokerified maid departed, when Maule started up, his face a perfect blaze, and his whole demeanour hot with excitement.

'Verily,' said the quakeress, 'if thee art about to exhort and expound, let me first call the handmaiden back again. It rejoiceth me to see thee thus, for we have lately had but few communications.'

'What I have to say is to you, and to you only,' exclaimed Maule, discarding all endeavour to preserve his assumed phraseology: 'it is to tell you that I am a wretch, a rogue, and a villain, and that I am going to leave you for ever.'

The quakeress shrieked. 'Nay! nay!—but I see thee art in one of thy fits. Sit thee down, sit thee down, and compose thyself.'

'That was one of my deceptions,' said Maule. 'I am an impostor from beginning to end. I am subject to no fits but fits of passion! I am no quaker! I never wore

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this hat and this coat until the day I saw you! never said thee and thou in my life! never was within-side of a meeting-house! and for poverty—why, I am as poor as a church mouse! But I will deceive you no longer. I will go and enlist for a soldier—I will enter on board a man-of-war—I will go and be a bricklayer's labourer, or else break stones on the highway—only say that you forgive me!'

'Forgive thee for breaking my heart!' said the quakeress, pathetically.

'Have I really made you miserable?'

'Then thee didst never love me, after all!'

Maule had something in the shape of a heart, and he could not help being a little touched at the question of the quakeress. He even began to fancy at the moment that he had quite an affection for her; and, at all events, his old habits would not have allowed him to say that, candidly speaking, he had never cared a farthing for her. The two feelings conjointly made him at once energetically exclaim, 'I never loved you so well as at this moment!'

A quakeress is just like any other woman. She forgives every sin that can be traced to a passion for herself, and she is mightily ingenious at tracing every sin up to this cause.

'And because thee didst harbour a liking to me, thee didst put on the garb of our people?'

'I will do nothing further to deceive you,' said Maule; but he could not bring himself to tell her that she was deceiving herself.

'And thee tellest me thee art poor?' said the quakeress, musingly.

'A very beggar!' said Maule. 'And now forgive me, and let me go.'

'Then thee will go?—and whither?'

'No matter what becomes of me!'

'But thee will not join thyself to the man-of-war that warreth on the land?'

'Anything!'

'Nor to the man-of-war that saileth on the great deep, as thou hast said?'

'Anywhere!'

'Nay, verily. Neither must thou betake thyself to the labour of the handicraft man. Thou art not suited to the toil.'

'What do I care what I do?'

'What shall become of thee?'

'Nothing so bad as I deserve.'

'And what shall become of me?'

Maule opened his eyes. 'You will be happy, because you deserve to be so. Only forgive me, and let me go.'

'Shall I let thee go?' said the quakeress; 'and now, when thou art more in the right way than thou hast ever been? Verily, I have wondered much that of late the reading of the Word brought no communications; and now I bethink me that it was that reading which hath brought thee to a right temper of mind. Verily, I think, thou hadst better, altogether, *stay*.'

'*You dearest of dear creatures!*' exclaimed Maule. And it seemed that the whity-brown quakeress had no particular objection to the grammatical construction of the sentence, as she did not remember to chide.

Just a week after this catastrophe, a tall thin lady, in a most immaculate garb of silken silver grey, and a gentleman whose clothes deserved an unblemished reputation, both of them in most perfect good-humour with each other and themselves, knocked at that certain door, in that certain street, in the which our veritable history commenced, known well to the geographers of Soho; and being ushered up stairs, presented themselves before the painter in his studio.

All the world knows that it is impossible to look cross or coldly upon well-dressed people. The painter, in his flowered dressing-gown, his flowing hair, his open shirt-collar and his foreign slippers, advanced with open hands to welcome his visitors.

'My dear madam!—my dear Maule! I congratulate you a thousand times. I wish you all the happiness you so richly deserve. Ah, Maule! I wish I may be as fortunate. I received your letter—yes, it was all an admirable jest. You see, my dear madam, that my friend Maule always was the most jocular, cheerful, good-tempered fellow breathing; all the men wished for him as a friend, and all the women wanted him for a husband.'

'Ah, thee hast been a butterfly, I fear me!' said the quakeress, affecting to reprove, but being inwardly flattered at the goodness of her choice, for all women like to have what all women would like to get.

'I am fixed now,' said Maule, lovingly, to his better half: 'nor do I ever wish to rove again.'

'Didst thee receive from our friend who maketh the garments—'

'Did the tailor send you a brown suit exactly like those which I—*stole*.'

'Hush—nay—*borrowed*.'

'Ha! ha! ha! that was an excellent joke, but Maule always was such a good fellow for fun! Yes, I received them.'

'And did the garments match as to colour?'

'O, exactly—to a shade.'

'And be they of as good fabric?'

'O, better.'

'And the hat?'

'All to a hair.'

'Then thee art clear of that debt,' said the quakeress to her husband.

'I now owe nothing to anybody but you.'

'And now,' said the quakeress, turning to the painter, 'wilt thee paint thy friend? Verily I should like to see his face looking upon me from the wall when he himself is absent. Truly it is a pleasant thing to look upon a face that we love, and that loveth us.'

'As I do now,' said Maule.

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MEMOIRS OF AN ITALIAN EXILE.*

CHAPTER IX.

Bad tidings from a good quarter.

'Lontan dagli occhi, lontan dal core.'

The first tidings of the *émeutes* of Romagna and Modena had already excited a sufficient sensation among the young prisoners of Compiano; but the news of a complete revolution at Parma raised their hearts to the highest pitch of feverish excitement. How our young comrades at the university, our fellow conspirators, could, in the first heat of success, have thought of anything in the world besides ourselves; how they had hesitated one moment to hasten to our rescue—to break open the iron gates of the castle, and demolish it to its very foundation—was what really passed our comprehension. And if anything could be wanting to increase our surprise and resentment, it was to hear, through the same report, that one of the most active agents in that political catastrophe, and one of the members of the provisional regency who now ruled uncontrolled over the destinies of the state, was that same Professor Molini for whose sake we had so warmly engaged in that fine row at the university, and had thereby provoked the tyrannical measure which had added so much fuel to the torch of popular discontent. It was more than enough to drive us mad.

Two days afterwards, something like an official demonstration of what had taken place in the metropolis was transmitted to the captain of our mighty garrison. It was an order, signed by Colonel Fuseli, the new commander of the national guard, and generalissimo of all the forces of the state, instructing all his subaltern officers and chiefs of military detachments to substitute the tricolour cockade and the Italian national colours, white, red, and green, instead of the well-known cognizance of Maria Louisa, *cidevant* Duchess of Parma, Placentia, &c.

Still not a word about us. The decree had been sent by express; the messenger was also the bearer of about a dozen tricolour cockades, such as had been hastily cut up and stitched together by the voluntary contributions of patriotic ladies and females at Parma; but still not a letter or message from our parents and friends—not a word about us. All was going on right and smooth; the Austrians stirred not; the town enjoyed the most blessed calm; the weather was as fine as it had ever been, time out of memory;—only nobody seemed to care a farthing about us.

To the feelings of humiliation and discouragement that a similar conduct on the part of persons who had been so liberal of fair promises, and protestations of sympathy and devotedness, was but too amply calculated to awaken, other circumstances were added to weigh down my heart with a thousand misgivings.

The revolution at Parma had taken place on the thirteenth of February. Now, the number thirteen has, from the remotest epoch, been always considered as fatal to the success of Italian undertakings. The first cockade that was handed to one of the soldiers of our station—I was looking at them from one of the battlements while the distribution was taking place in the tilting-yard—was by that stupid dolt suffered to fall in the dust.

Reader, I believe I have already said—or, if I have not, I may just as well state it now, for I do not care if all the world know it—that I was fondly addicted to superstition. No man truly great is entirely free from it. And though the self-evidence of this truism does not equally prove the correctness of its contrary, still I confess that I clung to a great number of hobbies and prejudices, and cherished them in the core of my heart, as if they had been an essential part of that greatness after which it was my folly to aspire.

The ominous date of that political change, and the tone of apathy, not to say of contempt and derision, with which the emblem of what was to be the regeneration of the noblest of nations was received by a few ignorant boors, who, in the unconsciousness of their happy ignorance, seemed reluctant to give up the enamelled badge of their sovereign for that coarse and ill-shaped patchwork of tawdry ribands, struck me as remarkably inauspicious and fatal.

Still, the signal of Italian emancipation had been given; and, however apprehensive I might be as to its ultimate result, my greatest anxiety at the present moment was, lest I should be kept shut up in a dungeon while the great cause was debated, and that everything should thrive, and all be done without me.

I jumped up from my chair with a sudden start whenever the thought came upon me, and walked to and fro with a step of impatience and frenzy. 'No! no!' I exclaimed; 'thanks to heaven! there are Austrians enough yet in Lombardy!'

My young friends and partners of that now dull and insupportable abode were not less uneasy and mutinous. We began to commune with each other—to complain, to consult, to conspire. We came to this unanimous resolution—that our imprisonment, under the present circumstances, was equally unreasonable and illegal; that we were amply entitled to put an end to it whenever we had the means; that we should not—would not—bear it any longer.

Once determined upon this point, we felt more tranquil and comfortable. We looked about us; we measured at one glance the height of our battlements, the thickness of our walls and doors; we tried the strength of our bolts and bars, and counted our friends and enemies;—we were soon convinced of the practicability of our evasion.

The height from the battlements to the

* Continued from p. 91.

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moat was truly formidable; but we reminded ourselves of all we had read in history and romance. We thought of Baron Trenck, of Cellini and the castle St. Angelo; —we were all ready to embark on our dangerous flight.

The reader will remember that the battlements were thrown open, for our relaxation, from sunrise to sunset, and that during several weeks we had been enabled to make ourselves acquainted with every nook and corner in the upper regions of the castle. In a dark recess, under the roof of the south-western turret, there was a treasure—a treasure which had lain unheeded, and almost unnoticed, until that day, but for which we were now ready to give one half of our blood—a rope!—a good, thick, new hempen rope, several fathoms in length. There it lay, among heaps of firewood, timber, lime, stones, and other unwieldy materials which that rope used to be instrumental to lift up from the court to the battlements, to be stowed away in the store-rooms.

We hailed it with transport. We handled and examined it with more eagerness, perhaps, than was consistent with the dictates of prudence, while some of us endeavoured to entertain our rugged gaoler, whose instructions were never to leave us alone for a moment, and to divert his attention by pointing out some object afar off on the hills.

I have also said, somewhere above, that we had been put out of our guard by the blunt, uncouth, but, on the whole, servile manners of that turnkey, and unanimously set him down as a heavy, thick-skulled stupid sort of a fool;—it was not long before the fellow gave us ample reason to understand that we ourselves were the fools.

And now all our *renseignements* were taken, our hearts fluttered with impatience; our hopes, doubts, and fears were written in our faces—but we fancied no man could read them.

And the sun set, and the evening drum rolled, and the fowls went to roost—and we were brought back to our berths.

We called for our supper, and ate it with a very indifferent appetite. Then we were all awfully silent and dumb, and, a moment after, we burst into a loud but most unprovoked laugh—on the whole, we looked exceedingly foolish.

At last we pleaded sleep and weariness; our keeper bade us a very good night, and we were left to ourselves.

Hurrah!—we were all alone. The clock had struck twelve—all was dark and still—nothing was heard but the wild and melancholy groan of the north wind. Captain Ridolfi had donned his nightcap, and put the extinguisher on his candle—the sentry had repaired to his box; all seemed propitious but one thing—it was Friday night!

There was a boy amongst us, the youngest and smartest of the family, who had been bred up in the country, and could climb trees, fences, and walls like a squirrel—rather a rash than a bold youth, naturally fond of danger and mischief—and his name was Gasparino. He was dark and short, and, notwithstanding his rare agility, rather thickset and stout; and as, with the exception of their dingy costume, he looked, of all things in the world, most like a chimney-sweeper, he went among us by the name of the 'Petit Savoyard.'

It was precisely such a trial of dexterity as is daily performed by the juvenile members of that smutty brotherhood, that we required of our own Flibbertygibbet.

We removed our chairs from the chimney, and put our fire out. We looked up: the flue ran up straight, and invitingly broad and rough, as if it had been meant for a flight of stairs. Our friend was to reach the roof through the chimney, let himself down on the battlements through a dismantled skylight, creep to the store-room, and possess himself of the rope, on which hung the anchor of our hopes, and assist us, by the aid thereof, to climb up after him: hence nothing remained but to make the rope fast to one of the battlements, drop down one after another, and take to our heels. Nothing could be easier or safer.

Gasparino stripped himself of his coat, brushed his hair back from his forehead, as he was wont when he set about some of his *tours d' addresse*, then jumped on the shoulders of the tallest of us, and was soon out of sight on his heavenward way.

With open mouths and quaking hearts, and eyes smarting under a shower of dust, we stood staring and listening from the foot of the chimney. We heard him struggling to break through the openings of the chimney-top, and one or two tiles were hurled down into the moat. Presently a noise like a clap of thunder came down the chimney, and down tumbled our valiant pioneer with the accelerated speed of an avalanche. He fell among us with a blackened face, torn clothes and bruised hands and limbs, and, as soon as he could recover his breath, 'By jingo,' he cried, 'the skylight is barred and fastened within!'

Our coffee in the morning tasted bitter, our bread salt, our butter flat, stale, and unprofitable. Our Cerberus came in with the same vacant stare, with the same meek, contrite, and obsequious air, as if nothing had been.

Our breakfast over, we returned once more to our all-important and, as it now proved, arduous and dangerous scheme. Our design being evidently detected, the necessity of acting with redoubled speed and determination pressed itself upon us. There was a moment when some of us, as if prompted by a fiend, very coolly proposed that we should whet a few of our table-knives, invite our commander to dinner, and, amid the din of his convivial mirth, we should fall upon him with drawn weapons, gag and tie him to the table, and compel him to enable us, by a written order to our keeper and guards, to go out into the court-yard, whence we might

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reach the open country ere the alarm could be given.

This plan, however, was soon abandoned, as both inhuman and impracticable; but we plunged deeper into another, which seemed to offer some better chances of success.

Every Sunday morning, at ten o'clock, mass was celebrated in the chapel of the castle, and we were invariably requested to attend. Captain Ridolfi and his lieutenant, the doctor, the garrison, and servants, were all present, and it was only on the recurrence of that day that we were allowed to have a glimpse of the commander's ladies, and of the other females living at the castle. Our garrison, when complete, was composed of twelve fusileers, besides the two officers. Of these, two had been, in consequence of breach of discipline, thrown into a dungeon not far from our apartments; and though it was possible that they might be at church in the morning, the irons with which they would be loaded, the ill-treatment they endured, and their gratitude for some dish of meat, or a few pence they occasionally received from us, would be sufficient to keep them out of the way. Of the remaining ten, one was sent every morning by the Captain to Borgotaro for his provision of fresh meat, and another was, of course, on duty at the castle-gate; so that our guards were on an even number with us.

Not far from the door of the chapel there was a low bench, on which we might kneel, or by which stand, according as our devotion prompted us. All along the bench, in a long row, those eight soldiers were to enter after us, and stand beside us, with their faces turned towards the altar. Their muskets were left in the guard-room, and they had no weapons but their short infantry sabres hanging behind them, with their hilts provokingly turned to us, and almost within reach of our hands.

Each of us was then to secure his man at a given signal; we were all, with an instantaneous rush, to lay hands on their swords and snatch them from the scabbards; then make our way through the door into the gateway, disarm the sentinel, or stick him to the door-post; and, if necessary, lay hold of the muskets in the guard-room to make good our escape.

The Captain and lieutenant stood too far from us, and the gaoler was too old and deaf to take an immediate share in the action, and we might reckon with certainty that the screaming and swoons of the women would bring further dismay and confusion among the ranks of the enemy, and operate an opportune diversion in our favour.

Whilst we were congratulating each other on the plausibility of our plan, chance brought us an unlooked-for but most welcome auxiliary in the person of Doctor Caluga. He had been, during all that week, warm and cordial in his condolences for the undeserved treatment we met with on the part of our friends and relatives at Parma, and had offered to raise a band of mountaineers in the neighbourhood, to storm the castle, and rescue us by main force.

But the very tone of bombast and bravado in which this proposal was made, had inspired us with mistrust: all that we had heard to his discredit from some of our visitors was forcibly recalled to our memory, and we had never deemed it safe to communicate with him on the subject of our desperate schemes.

But as he now suddenly intruded upon us in the midst of those tumultuous deliberations, our eagerness got the better of our cautiousness and suspicion, and we laid our plans open before him.

'My lads,' said he, 'by heavens, I will be with you!"

He added, that he would take his pistols from his holsters, and put them in his great-coat pockets instead of his case of surgical instruments; that he would take his place, as he was wont when free from his professional engagements, near the captain's pew, and fly to our assistance, whenever by any chance our plan should miscarry; one of his menials should, in the meantime, wait without with his horse, so as to prevent the sentinel from fastening the iron door, or raising the drawbridge. All that day and the evening, till late, was spent in propounding and removing doubts and difficulties; and we were about to retire to prepare ourselves by a few hours of rest for the great events of the morrow, when the doors of our apartment were thrown open with a sudden clang, and in marched Captain Ridolfi, followed by the turnkey and by a stranger, in whom, to my utter amazement, I beheld one of my father's tenants, who waved his cap with a low bow and broad grin, and shouted, 'Buona sera, Signori!'

'Gentlemen,' said the captain, 'you are free. Heaven knows I should have wished to let you out through the door long ago, and spare you the trouble of breaking your necks by falling from the battlements; but what could I do?—I am a military man, and accustomed to wait for orders.'

As he said so, the habitual tear stole from the veteran's eye. He handed me a paper where I read as follows:—

'The commander of the castle and garrison of Compiano, on delivery of the present order, shall release the eight prisoners committed to his charge, by an order dated January 8th.

'Given at the Palace of the Presidency, &c., Feb. 14th, 1831.

'Signed, COSTA MOLINI,

'Member of the Provisional Regency,' &c.

Reader, if you think that the unexpected tidings of our deliverance; that so sudden and easy a dénouement of a drama that only a few minutes before looked so dark and complicate; that that release for which we had engaged in a rash attempt, and laid our very lives at stake, was more welcome to us when announced in the shape of an official protocol; if, in a word, you think that, after hav-

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ing waited so long, and prepared ourselves for the worst, we would rather owe our liberty to the late interference of our friends and partisans at home, than to our own bold and strenuous exertions—then, allow me to tell you, you know nothing of human nature.

That vague feeling of disappointment only lasted, however, a few seconds. The consciousness of our liberty rushed upon us like a blaze of ethereal light; we threw ourselves into each other's arms, and for the first time gave a unanimous utterance to that joyous cry that was now re-echoed from one end of the country to the other, but which was, alas! too soon and too disgracefully to be hushed: '*Viva l'Italia!*'

'Viva l'Italia!' cried the old veteran of the kingdom of Italy. 'Gentlemen, you must not remain one moment more in this ill-omened and gloomy quarter. My lady and a good supper are in waiting in the hall; you shall have beds for the night in the state apartments.'

'Beds for the night!' we replied with one voice; 'who talks of sleeping or of staying one minute? To horse, to horse, my lads, we will be at Parma by day-break. Hurrah, hurrah for Italy!'

It was irrevocable. We took our leave of the captain's lady in a hurried, and, I am afraid, not very gentlemanly manner; we refused to sit down, and ate our supper standing, whilst, at our request, the ladies were busily employed in sewing tricolour cockades on our travelling caps, and in less than twenty minutes we were shaking hands with Captain Ridolfi at the castle-gate.

Bad news meanwhile were in store for us. It was then ten o'clock in the evening; not a horse could be had in Compiano, for love or money, with the exception of the doctor's mare, who would as soon have thought of lending his wife.

The bearer of the government despatch, who was mounted on one of my father's horses, had ridden far and wide, and his jaded charger could do no more service for that night. Moreover the Taro was swollen by a sudden thaw, and we could not hope to reach Borgotaro that night; yet we could not be induced to stay.

At the distance of twelve miles, across a rough and disastrous, but dry, mountainous road, lay the castle and town of Bardi, where mules could be had on hire at any hour of the day or night. We determined to set off on foot for Bardi.

We stopped at the doctor's door as we crossed the village of Compiano. The doctor went through the ceremony of a hasty introduction to his lady, and held up his children to our admiration. He provided us with two faithful guides, and with long iron-spiked mountain staves, and we started.

Between Compiano and Bardi, as it has been said, there is a distance of twelve miles; but, according to the phrase of these high landers, they are such miles as the wolf runs through before breaking his fast, (*di quelle miglia che fa il lupo a digiuno,*)—such narrow, steep, and sunken paths, such rocks and ravines and precipices, and mazy forests and roaring streams, and dismal hollows, that, enhanced as they were by the horrors of a dreary winter, and of a pitch-dark night, were sufficient to give us a nightmare during all our lifetime, only by dreaming of them.

It was past three o'clock in the morning before we arrived without serious accident, and knocked at the door of a friend in Bardi. He was a young poet, who had left the university only a few months before our arrest, and settled in the country with a young wife, for whose sake all his juvenile longings after literary distinction had suddenly come to a dead stand. We roused him from his genial slumbers, in accordance with that privilege that bachelors and pilgrims have, to take their share in the comforts and blessings of married life. Whilst one of his people spread some refreshments on his hospitable board, and another had departed in quest of our mules, our friend entertained us by an account of the restless state of his mind, and of the new temptations that the devil laid in his path to estrange him from home, and mix the alloy of a vague repining in the cup of his domestic felicity.

The first report of a revolution at Parma had reawakened all the sanguineness of his ambitious disposition; he mourned over the state of inaction to which his wedded life condemned him, and told us that he had felt inclined more than once to leave his blooming bride cold in her bed, and ride down to town to play his part on the political stage.

Poor Luigi Uberto!—I saw him in town not many days afterwards, as busy, as hearty and boisterous, as if the fate of the country had depended on his exertions. His youthful lady waited long for him in her cold bed; but that bed was never to receive the happy pair together again. He was killed in fight, an officer of the foreign legion in Spain.

Meanwhile the bells of our mules were jingling at the door; we took a melancholy leave of our repentant Benedict, and went our way.

The mules of our Apennines, of the true Genoese breed, are perhaps the finest, strongest, and most sure-footed animals of the kind, not excepting even the much boasted African and Andalusian races, and their steady and even pace is so rapid as to outspeed, in the long-run, whatever there is more swift and strong among men or beast.

Yet even their vigorous but monotonous walk, and the music of their bells, and the cheers of their lusty muleteers, could not satisfy the eagerness and impatience of their fretful riders. As long as the duskiness of night prevailed, we suffered ourselves to be led by our guides; but the morn had no sooner dawned, and the road no sooner lay clear and tolerably smooth before us, than some difference arose between our mules' minds and ours, as to the rate we should go.

Now, with all its good, sound, sterling qualities, a mule has this peculiarity, that it can be prevailed upon by no arguments, entreaties, or menaces, to give up its own

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for other people's opinions. Our goodly chargers had taken it into their heads that we could not ride any faster than six miles per hour, and we might have broken our staves on their skulls, ere we induced them to quicken their steps by an inch.

Things went so far, that after having had recourse to every contrivance we could hit upon, three of us jumped from our pack-saddles, and determined to march forward on foot. We ran—O how we ran! The morning was bright and frosty, and the wind blew from the north-east; such a wind as has power to brace up your muscles to the rigidity and elasticity of steel, to benumb and deaden them to all sensation of labour and pain.

We bent our chests forward, we brandished our long staves in a warlike attitude, and we ran. The famous mules of the Genoese breed were soon far out of sight in the rear. The few wayfaring peasants we met on our road wore on their hats the national badge, with which some zealous patriots had, no doubt, decorated them in the city, or in some of the market towns. The greater number seemed more pleased with that cockade, as an odd piece of finery, than penetrated with the dignity of freemen, to which that emblem was meant to raise them.

Some, however, felt otherwise, and especially the daring smuggler, who trusted the day had come when he could have a fair shooting-match with his bitter enemies of the custom-house, or the desperate outlaw and deserter, who had old scores to settle with the country gendarmes, hailed us boldly and cheerfully as they passed by; they doffed their hats, they pointed to the gay ribands hanging thereon, and sang out, '*Viva l'Italia!*'

'VIVA L'ITALIA!' I have heard the best airs of Pasta and Malibran; I have applauded Bochsa's harp and Paganini's fiddle; I have been mad for some of the strains of Straniera and Norma; but no music ever sounded so sweetly to my ears, no notes ever fell so magically on my heart, as those two words—'VIVA L'ITALIA!'

Hope and fear have, by turns, elated or cast down my heart. I have known evil and misery, and had also my share of terrestrial bliss; but under no influence of consternation or despondency, during no paroxysm of anguish, or trance of joy, was I ever so forcibly reminded of my Creator; never was I so fervent in my prayer as when I thanked God that I had lived to see the day in which those words were to be the war-cry of a whole nation—in which we could utter them in the face of heaven and earth, and die with these words on our lips on the battle-field. Alas!

Well—we walked as if the infernal legions had been at our heels; we never talked, never stopped to take breath; at least I do not recollect that we did. At what inn we put up to take our meals, and whether indeed we had any, I have at this time no distinct idea. The castle of Bardi is only twenty-five miles from Fornovo. The road runs across hill and dale, along the banks of the Ceno. Such, however, was our inconsiderate haste, that, led astray by by-paths, which we fondly hoped would shorten our way, it was past sunset when we reached Fornovo. At Fornovo we found travelling-carriages, which one of our provident parents had sent forward for our accommodation. In two hours more we were in sight of the lights of the metropolis. The gate had been thrown open, and a large crowd was gathered under its lofty vault, awaiting our arrival. The gateway and the bridge were both lined with a double array of national guards, and I thought that their muskets shone beautifully on the citizens' broadcloth. The people crowded round our carriage, and shouted tremendously when it was ascertained that three of the prisoners of Compiano were within. Our carriage could only proceed at slow and rare intervals, harassed as we were by a thousand questions, protestations, and felicitations of the excited multitude.

Poor people! They had freed us. They looked upon us as the first prize of the battle they had won, as a living trophy of their glorious achievement. The throng increased in proportion as we advanced into a more populous neighbourhood, so that I was not a little relieved when they finally set me down at my door, and the giddy ovation was over.

Much as it may appear unaccountable, I did not immediately walk up stairs, where I knew my poor father and sisters longed for their redeemed captive. I crossed the court-yard, went out through the stable-door, and found myself alone in the street.

There was a house, you know, a long-sighed-for house, the abode of some person who was dearer to me, undutiful son that I was, than any of the inmates of my paternal dwelling. To that house I repaired before I saw any other living being—to Marina's. The warmth and transport with which I have previously mentioned that gifted woman, the glowing terms in which I have endeavoured to describe the nature of my attachment to her, may perhaps, with good reason, have called forth the frowns of rigid censors. Marina was another man's wife, and I had no eyes but for her, no thought that was not centred on her. Yet even now, at four thousand and five hundred miles distance, after nearly ten years' absence, methinks that I can look back to those happy days of dreamy infatuation without the slightest pang of remorse. My love for her was a pure, undesigning worship. It consisted of an absolute, exclusive, unconditional devotion—of an utter abnegation of every selfish and worldly desire—of a constant endeavour to ennoble, refine, and elevate my feelings, so as to bring myself up to what seemed to me her level of angelic perfection. There was not one among my most ardent wishes which interfered with any person's rights or duties; not one that I would not have freely con-

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fessed—not before men, who could not have understood me—but before God.

And now, reader, that I have searched into the depth of my heart, and laid it open before you, allow me to introduce you into the shrine of the idol to whom I granted so great an ascendency over my soul.

'There was a sound of revelry by night,'

as I walked up the wide staircase of the judge's house, which spread a chill through my veins: the raking of a violin had its wonted effect on my ears.

'Out of sight out of mind,' said I, smiling faintly, and holding fast to the iron railings for support. 'Here are the joys of the first Sunday in Lent going on merrily, and their friends, for aught they know, still shut up at Compiano.'

The door opened meanwhile, and I was enabled to enter without being either announced or perceived. Marina's little girls, and a crowd of their young friends, were engaged in a juvenile quadrille. Round a table, in the next room, were the judge and three other gentlemen seated at tresette,* whilst two or three lady-mothers were ensconced on a sofa. Marina sat alone, gazing thoughtfully on her young child. The advocate was not there.

'Here he is at last!' she cried out, as I walked up to her, and seated myself by her side in silence. 'Here he is!'

The whist-players raised their heads for a moment, and the judge waved his hand towards me—'Oh, oh! De Negri, my dear fellow, I am glad to see you,' then went on with the game; but Marina's children, Mary Ann first of all, broke up their country-dance, crowded around me in a fairy group, and nearly smothered me with their kisses. Little dears!

'So then,' said I at last, when that girlish greeting was over, and the children had joined their partners—'so then, out of sight out of mind. The prisoners of Compiano were such dangerous wights, that even their best friends thought twice ere they could be resolved on letting them loose.'

'De Negri,' answered the lady, with a slight frown of resentment, 'I am afraid the solitude of a dungeon has caused an overgrowth in your selfishness, as it has in your hair. I grant that this last week of your imprisonment must have appeared to you long and unaccountable; but since last Sunday evening, since the consummation of our glorious revolution,' she added with a sigh, 'your friends have been expecting you every hour.'

'I assure you, lady, that our delay proceeded from all but remissness or sluggishness on our part,' said I, with some irony.

'No, it did not—we know it; but your friends have been imposed upon—meanly, wretchedly played upon. However, here you are at last,' she added, offering her hand, which I pressed with affection. 'Here you are, and all will be right yet.'

There was something mournful and bitter in her words, and more in the tone of her voice. I perceived at once that all was not, and, notwithstanding her flattering assurance, all would not soon be, quite right.

'De Negri,' she began, as she almost hid her face on her child's long ringlets, 'I am glad you are here. I hope not a little from the influence that the earnestness and uprightness of your young mind may exert upon the cold-hearted and pusillanimous deliberations of the doting fools that have now in their hands the destinies of the country. You remember I told you once that I felt I should not live to behold with my eyes the national standard of this unhappy Italy unfolded. I am now afraid they only raised it to see it ingloriously deserted and trampled in the dust.—Nay, frown not, but sit down and listen, and, believe me, it grieves me to have no better news to communicate; but I deem it my duty to give you a fair insight of the state of things.—There is a set of old men, and some of them enjoy the highest credit among the people, and are now at the head of our free government, who seem bent on undoing what has been so happily and so easily achieved, who disown the revolution.

'Believe not by this that they are false to, or lukewarm in the cause of the country; on the contrary, most of them are known as the sincere and deserving patriots and martyrs of 1820; but they have no confidence, no moral courage, no reliance on the courage of others.

'The insurrection of these petty states is not for them the beginning of an Italian revolution. Had it been meant for such, the first signal should have been given at Milan or Turin. The first step should have been an attack on the Austrians. As it is now, our revolution is only an experiment. It was based on the principle of non-intervention, proclaimed by the rulers of France. If that hold good, if the Austrians respect it—if they, as they have done hitherto, do not meddle with us, but shut themselves up in their barracks, as was the case at Ferrara, where the garrison looked on impassive and silent while the papal authorities were beaten and dispersed,—then our victory is both easy and certain. Each of the revolted states will settle their little matters separately, until the largest divisions of the country, Naples and Piedmont, follow their example, and then—then they will join their forces together, throw off the mask, and enter the field against Austria.

'Our main object at present, they say, is to avoid a premature collision with Austria, to afford her no pretext for attacking us, without at least breaking the compact of non-intervention, and thereby incurring the chances of a war with France.

'Every measure taken by the provisional regencies of Parma, Modena, and Bologna, is in keeping with the fond notions of this

* An Italian whist.

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narrow-minded policy. Thus the patriots of Bologna deemed it unsafe to hasten to the rescue of Menotti and his partisans at Modena, though the report of their successful revolt was sufficient to bring confusion and terror into the heart of the duke, and to disband his soldiery. The Modenese equally refused to allow the youths of Reggio to march upon Parma, when our fate still hung in suspense, and they all now forbear from any attempt against Tuscany, which they all feel would be both successful and big with the most important results, lest, by interfering with each other, they should be the first to violate the great principle of non-intervention, the palladium of the liberties of Europe.

'What more? They even dreaded lest a mutual compact of offensive and defensive alliance between them might be construed into an open transgression of the new rights of nations proclaimed by the French, and, far from joining their forces and taking the best measures to secure themselves against their common enemy, they employ their young volunteers in useless parading and patrolling, as if they apprehended no mischief but from the people, who as yet have behaved with the most admirable order and soberness.

'Luckily, however, these cautious and tardy politicians are not the whole nation. Those who have accomplished the revolution, who have staked their lives on a rather hazardous game, though it has turned out so unexpectedly bloodless and easy—the men of your own generation, De Negri, the young, the warm, the confiding heroes of the 13th of February, understand nothing of this timid and irresolute policy. Their cry is still—what it was on the first heat of success—THE INDEPENDENCE, UNITY, AND LIBERTY OF ITALY! The object of their warmest desire is what we undoubtedly must sooner or later come to—a war with Austria.

'Hence there are in this our metropolis, as well as in many other of the revolted towns, two opposite parties—the politicians who would temporize and be guided by circumstances, and the independents, who would hasten the catastrophe, and force the course of events.

'The latter of these two parties is, of course, by far the most numerous; but the others are strong in their long-established popularity, in the power with which they were invested by the reverence of those very men who are now their warmest opponents. Their views are in accordance with the principles of a faint-hearted but foresighted prudence. They dwell on the peril and difficulty of our enterprize; on the strength and vicinity of our Austrian enemies; on the distance and instability of our French allies; on our own unarmed, unorganized, helpless situation. They represent the bloody, merciless execution to which a rash unsupported provocation would expose the country. They appeal to the vague fears of the weaker part of the multitude. They enlist in their cause a desponding crowd of old men, women, and children.

'There is, no doubt, but too much truth in all this. We are indeed threatened with the most dire calamities, if the Austrians attack us; and my own mind is that, according to their rule, they are only waiting for orders from Vienna to do so. So be it; but what good can result from inaction and despondency? These prudent remarks might have been of some avail a week ago; but now the die is cast, the Rubicon is crossed. Why should we waver any longer and repine? If war cannot be avoided, why not carry it on in the enemy's field? Why should we not cross the Po, and attack the Austrians whilst they are yet unprepared? Why not take advantage of the general ferment of Lombardy and Piedmont, of the consternation of the Council of Vienna? why not win the sympathies, and deserve the assistance of France, and of all nations of Europe, by a bold and steady conduct, rather than depend on their promises, or rely on their protection?

'Alas! poor De Negri!—I am mad with vexation and disappointment, and I see with regret that this is but a sad welcome to the released prisoner; but it was necessary that you should learn to whom you are indebted for the useless prolongation of your captivity. Now, hear me!

'Encompassed as it is by the Austrian dominions, our little state is the first exposed to invasion. On all sides, beyond the Po, at the distance of twelve or thirteen miles, there are Austrian garrisons ready to march against us. You may easily believe, therefore, that our government is under the most immediate influence of fear. The more so, as our youth and all our people are most ungovernably daring and violent. If you were to read their edicts, or attend their councils, you might believe that we are still under the control of our ancient despotism, and that no political change ever took place.

'As they were raised to their undefined and precarious dignity before Maria Louisa's departure, and that lady was compelled to sanction, by her signature, their appointment as well as the adoption of the national colours and the armament of the national guard, so you would think that they consider themselves only as the lieutenants of the Duchess of Parma, entrusted with the charge of her states during her absence, and ready to resign their command whenever it may please her majesty to resume the reins of empire.

'The release of Maria Louisa from the hands of her people, is chiefly due to their exertions. They thought that her detention would have afforded a pretext for hostilities to the emperor, her father, and that, otherwise, she would have been in our way, whenever we should enter into negotiations with the neighbouring states for an Italian union.

'On the whole, I am perhaps glad that the unworthy woman is gone; but, would you

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believe it? our republican government have rejected the motion of the most ardent liberals, who wished to throw open the doors of her palace, to sell her trinkets and furniture by auction, and either employ the money in the purchase of arms and ammunition, of which we stand sadly in need, or distribute it among the poor to win the lowest classes to our cause. They pleaded the example of the ancient Romans, who returned to the Tarquinii their treasures, lest their gold should contaminate the hands of freemen, and lest that first example of violation of property should have a fatal influence on the predatory disposition of the people.

'The fact is, that they wanted to prepare themselves for the worst, and foreseeing the possibility of the return of Maria Louisa, they hoped they might be able to propitiate her to her rebellious subjects, by keeping her things snug, comfortable, and ready for her reception.

'Mind well, I do not mean to impeach our governors' honesty or disinterestedness, or the sincerity of their attachment to our common interests; only they have no faith in the final issue of this unfortunate revolution, and their main object is to keep it within the limits of the utmost moderation, so as to avoid the serious consequences which a more determinate course would certainly bring upon them and their accomplices.

'It is with this same view that they have obstinately opposed themselves to such measures as might be expected to be the natural consequence of liberty, and which alone could make the people aware of its blessings, such as the abolition of the most grievous taxes, the repeal of some heinous regulations of the police, and, in short, all that could gratify the most sanguine anticipations of the advocates of the public welfare.

'They have literally done nothing; and though, in consequence of the natural relaxation of all social orders, the people have already in fact amply vindicated their rights, though soon roused to the proud feelings of the importance and dignity of freemen, they have assumed the air and gait of a different race, yet they are, in point of positive fact, not legally possessed of a single civil right, more than they had under the ancient regime.

'All this, however, cannot last long, and if they would only so organize our militia as to put us in the best state of defence, we could afford them full leisure to frame their new constitution, or rather to come to an understanding with our brothers of Romagna and Modena, who have been talking of a meeting for the establishment of a national government.

'But among the first things that were demanded of them, as you may well imagine, the very first were the release of state-prisoners, and the recall of exiles. They answered evasively at first, because, as Maria Louisa was gone already, they felt that such an act was in itself as arbitrary as an open usurpation of sovereignty, the right of pardon being in all countries the first and most important privilege of the crown. But, besieged by the crowd of your parents and friends, they only signed an order for your deliverance, alleging the illegality of a general amnesty until the *déchéance* of Maria Louisa should be solemnly and definitely proclaimed.

'Well, of course we were satisfied for the present; but—I know you will never believe it—that order remained on their desk day after day, and we were left to wait and wonder what had become of you. Finally, your father, at the head of a large deputation, among whom the judge was none of the last—he is a good friend to you, De Negri, though you think him an apathist,—went in a body to the palace—which is now, of course, accessible to every person, and at every hour, and loudly protested against their duplicity. They pleaded the confusion and disorder into which they were thrown by their multifarious engagements, and handed them the decree, to which they had, by a most untoward accident, forgotten to give operation.

'Your father took hold of the important paper, and with due submission begged to take charge himself of its speedy delivery. You know the rest—you are here now, and, however late you arrive, you may be sure you will be in no want of employment.'

Marina had spoken long and warmly, as if to give vent to her indignation. But she had no sooner done than she felt the inhumanity of that disheartening communication; and, rising from her seat, she turned towards me with a more serene countenance, and added, by way of consolation;

'Enough, my dear friend, enough of this melancholy subject. The evening of your arrival ought to be an object of rejoicing, and so it will be, at least for our family. But—I forgot—you have no taste for quadrilles or waltzes,' she said, clapping her hands, and silencing the orchestra; 'my little children were enjoying the last pleasures of the season. Our carnival has been so dull!—But now we will have nothing but radiant and happy faces around us.—I see our rubber is over.—Come and have some supper with us.—You shall afterwards be in time to go and join your comrades, whom I dare say you will find revelling in the guard-rooms at the Town Hall. Perhaps they will give you better news than I had in store for you. You know I am rather addicted to croaking, and, after all, you may find out that things go on better than I supposed.'

Every one must be aware that I had no great appetite for my supper. Less than half an hour afterwards, I took my leave, with my head dizzy, and my heart in a storm.

'Well, after all,' said I, 'I might as well wish myself back to Compiano.'

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SIMILITUDINES.

BY MISS H. B. MACDONALD.

No. II.

MUSIC ON THE WATERS.

I HEARD a sound of human voices
Go forth upon the warring waves:
Sweet as the midnight sound that rises
From Peri-hunted caves.

And lo! they thus—earth's tuneful daughters—
In strains of melody unwreathed
Their soul, upon the wrathful waters,
Most magically breathed.

For ever, as its soft clear swelling
Commingling with the waters, grew,
The clamour of their wild rebelling
Seemed changed to music too!

Even thus, when, with its gentle calling,
On passion's deep discordancy
The magic voice of love is falling,
To make all harmony!

January, 1841.

HISTORY OF THE JEWS.*

FROM THE DECLINE OF THE MACCABEES TO THE PRESENT DAY.

BY M. CAPEFIGUE.

CHAPTER VII.—*Continued.*

State of the Jews in the empire, from Constantine to the publication of the Code of Justinian. A. D. 313.—527.

'WE are informed," write the Emperors Valens and Valentinian to the military prefect, 'that some soldiers have violated the asylum of the synagogues, and have pursued certain criminals into that sanctuary: the temples must be respected; they are admitted to be a place of refuge.'—You ask,' they reply to the count of the sacred largesses, 'how you must proceed against a man of official dignity who turns Jew: confiscate his property, and deprive him of his insignia of office; let him be held incapable of bequeathing, or receiving a bequest, by will: but his last deed must be disputed within five years of his death, otherwise the action will be dismissed.'†

The legislation of Theodosius, Honorius, and Arcadius, breathes a greater degree of indulgence. The Jews are then placed, like the other subjects of the empire, under the protection of the laws and the public administration; their synagogues are guarantied against the zeal of the Christians and the extortion of the magistrates: 'for no law prohibits their rites.'

'The counts of the sacred largesses, and the provincial magistrates, shall under no pretence impose tributes on the community of the Jews; if they do so notwithstanding this prohibition, they shall be punished as extortioners.* Special care must be taken never to insult by outrageous epithets "the most illustrious patriarchs" of the Hebrews.† As the Sabbath-day is a day of rest for the synagogue, the Jews on that day shall be exempted from all personal service. Any tumultuous assemblage of Catholics, for the design or purpose of setting fire to the oratories of the Israelites, shall be severely punished; even those synagogues which have been appropriated for other purposes, shall be forthwith restored to the masters and rabbins, unless they have been consecrated by bishops to the service of God. In the latter case, they must be indemnified for the loss, or rather the congregation of the faithful will supply them with a piece of land on which to build a new oratory.

'This protection of their rites and worship is all that the Israelites can demand. The magistrate shall not confer upon them the honours of the municipality, though they are liable to be called on to perform its duties. They shall be excluded from the militia of the palace, though they are at liberty to follow liberal professions, and are even eligible to the bar.‡ They must not forget that they ought to show an absolute respect for the religion of the prince, and abstain from publicly molesting it by a noisy celebration of such ceremonies, as the feast of Haman, at which their rejoicing too often exhibits itself in acts alarming to the Catholic religion, and subversive of the public order.§

'The careful superintendence of the magistrates, in all that concerns the interior peace of the empire, must not extend itself over the acts of jurisdiction in the synagogues regarding the Israelites: thus their *illustrious* patriarchs and their *respectable* primates will busy themselves with the interior ceremonies and arrangements of the oratories, without being exposed to the interference of the magistrates, either in the way of inquiring into their rites, or of adjudicating as to the validity of their religious excommunication: but all civil causes which the Jewish patriarchs and the primates have sometimes hitherto decided upon by the exercise of their own jurisdiction, shall henceforward be tried before the ordinary tribunal of the empire, and according to the Roman law. This regulation is meant to exclude the general facility of settling disputes by reference to Jewish arbitrators, provided the decision be submit-

* Continued from p. 104.
† Cod. Justin. de Judæis et Cælicolis.

* Cod. Theodos. lib. viii. *de Jud. et Cælicolis*, ad ann. 396.
† Ibid leg. 10. ad ann. 412.
‡ Cod. Theod. leg. 24, ad ann. 418.
§ Cod. Theodos. ad ann. 409.

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ted for the approval of the prætor. Everything transacted beyond these established limits shall be held lawful: thus, the patriarch Gamaliel, who has invaded the prerogatives of the prætors, must be brought to a sense of duty: he must be put in mind that his functions are strictly confined to religious affairs, and do not extend to judicial and practical matters.*

'The Jew shall be at full liberty to hold and possess territorial property and slaves, which he may dispose of, by sale or by gift, as he pleases; the apostate alone, who has forsaken Christianity to pray in the synagogue, shall be wholly incapable of enjoying the rights attached to property. The Jew shall not even be deprived of the power of making a will, a privilege attached to the rank of a citizen: at the same time, as it is to be feared that he may be hurried away by his religious prejudices and feelings, he shall not be permitted to disinherit that one, or those, of his children who may have embraced Christianity; the will shall be null and void, unless it leaves them as complete a portion as would have reverted to them had he died intestate. This nullity shall not extend to the emancipation of slaves; for freedom once obtained by an act, of whatever nature it may be, can no longer depend upon the chances of a will. But,' add the emperors, 'if the father has just motives for wishing to disinherit his son who has embraced Christianity, he ought in that case to express them: for example, if the ungrateful son, despising the parental authority, has dissipated his life in pleasure and debauch, or if he has withheld assistance from his father when in distress, then the latter may disinherit him, provided that he leaves him one-fourth of his rightful portion, *in honour of the religion*.†

'If Christians cannot be permitted to persecute the Jews, care must be taken, at the same time, not to encourage the spread of Judaism by imprudent concessions. The apostate, therefore, shall be severely punished: any slave whom a Jewish master has circumcised in disregard of the imperial laws shall become free in his own right, without even having recourse to the usual mode of enfranchisement before the prætor, unless, indeed, he has voluntarily consented to submit to circumcision; in which case he will be transferred from his Jewish master to the treasury. Christians ought always to avoid being present at Jewish ceremonies; the bishops will watch the priests, to see that they contract no intimacies in the society of the Israelites, and that they abstain from their passovers and public feasts. Such synagogues and oratories as fall from old age and decay shall not be rebuilt; but such, as have been pulled down and destroyed in a popular ferment, must be restored at the expense of the municipality, or even of the Christian congregation, if the bishop has in any way sanctioned or encouraged the disorder.'‡

* Cod. Theodos. ad ann. 412.
† Ibid. constitut. 28.—Cod. Justin. constit. 21.
‡ Ibid. const. 48

These laws, which still preserved, as we must perceive, a certain degree of wisdom and impartiality, were not always executed. The influence of the clergy was then too powerful over the multitude, and that multitude too excitable, for rescripts of moderation and justice to be obeyed in the provinces. The records attest that in the empire of the West, particularly in Italy, the exasperated populace spared not the synagogues, more than the temples of the Gods of polytheism. When Maximus crossed the Alps to invade Italy, the Jews and Pagans flocked to him from every direction, complaining of the persecutions they endured. Maximus granted them permission to rebuild the temples and synagogues which had been pulled down.

An instance taken from the history of St. Ambrose affords another proof of the resistance offered by the bishops and priests to the intentions, often impartial, of the emperors towards the Jews. In the town of Osrhoena,* the Christians, in one of these paroxysms of fanaticism so common among the Christians of Asia, had burned a synagogue down to the ground;† it was the day of one of the great solemnities of the church; a procession of monks paraded the streets, singing the solemn hymn of the Maccabees, when they found themselves suddenly assailed by a band of Valentinian heretics; a battle ensued; the monks came off victorious; but not content with defacing the Valentinian churches, they burned down one of the synagogues of Callinicus. The disorder had been so tremendous, and the damages committed so considerable, that the commander of the militia in Asia felt it his duty to inform the emperor of it. A wise and judicious rescript of Theodosius compelled the bishop and monks to rebuild the synagogue which had been destroyed, and to indemnify the Jews for all the losses they might have sustained.‡

It is on this account that St. Ambrose denounced the decision of Theodosius to the Christian world, as a document full of iniquity. In a letter which he addresses to the emperor, he expresses himself with a religious susceptibility which the most ardent zeal can hardly excuse. 'The words of a priest cannot be displeasing to your clemency,' he says; 'I will speak, then, of the strange decision which compels a Christian bishop and the pontiffs of the church to aid in the re-establishment of a synagogue. Do you not see the sad position in which you place them? if they obey your orders, they forget the sacred duties of religion; if they refuse obedience, they put themselves in rebellion against your decrees. Remember Marcus of Arethusa: he preferred bowing down his neck to the sword of the executioner, rather than be accessory, under Julian, to the re-establishment of the temple of Apollo,

* Callinicus.
† Cædrenus maintains that the sedition occurred at Constantinople, p. 248, and Zonar, tit. iii. p. 30.
‡ Cod. Theodos. lib. xvi. tit viii. leg. 9.

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and the profane groves of Daphne. I take upon myself the crime of the bishop of Callinicus; I am the culprit—strike. I openly declare, if I have not pulled down the synagogues at Milan, it is because God has destroyed them himself: they are fallen; there are none in existence throughout my diocese. One may speak of the disorders of the monks, and of the evils which they have entailed; but the calls of religion speak higher to pious souls! Besides, have they repaired the churches of Christ ruined by the Jews under the apostate? The houses and the churches of the Christians in Nazareth and Alexandria are still buried in rubbish; and though Jesus is not avenged, such great pains are taken to appease the synagogue! The Jews have burnt our altars and polluted our fonts with impunity, and no demand for reparation has been made from them; and yet they would force a bishop, and with him an entire Christian people, to raise up the obscure synagogues of a town on the farthest frontier of the East! There is another consequence of the malevolence of the Jews, who invoke imprisonment and death upon our heads. Do you hear them already glorying in our distresses? They will sing, Our temples are now enriched with your spoils, as of yore the capital glistened with the spoils of the Cimbrians and the barbarians. These words will stigmatize your reign in the eyes of posterity, and will accuse your soul in presence of the eternal Judge, the disposer of crowns.'*

The vehement eloquence of the Bishop of Milan was unheeded; his letter, addressed to Theodosius, remained unanswered; and upon the emperor's visit to the church of Milan, St. Ambrose delivered some severe remarks upon the indifference and weakness of the prince before the Christian congregation. Theodosius listened without interruption to the indiscreet preacher, and when the ardent bishop came down from the pulpit, he confined himself to observing, that he would modify his orders to a certain extent, provided the turbulent monks would promise to retire to the desert, and live by themselves.

The bold remonstrances of St. Ambrose, then, prove that the feeling of the generality of Christians was even more inveterate than the laws of the prince and the disposition of the government. In a society destitute of regular and fixed institutions, and in which a religion, exercising a powerful ascendant over the multitude, had sprung up and triumphed, the wise regulations of the emperors must often have been overborne by the torrent of popular passions. Thus the situation of the Jews was not always what the law had made it; and while the intolerant hands of the Christians spared neither the temple of the gods of Olympus, nor their gold and ivory images, the modest synagogues of the Israelite could not expect to receive a milder treatment; the rescripts of the prince, and the vigilance of the magistrates, could not restrain the outrageous zeal and enthusiasm of the bishops and the people.

However, with all this inextinguishable animosity, which divided the Jews and the Christians, some more enlightened individuals, divesting themselves of the vulgar prejudices, did not altogether abandon an intercourse which the origin and common traditions of the two religions often rendered necessary. In his Commentary on Jeremiah, St. Jerome confesses that he stood indebted to the learning and instructions of a rabbin for a better understanding of the Scriptures. Accustomed from his youth to cultivate a knowledge of the Latin tongue, and attracted by the muse of Horace, and the eloquence of Cicero, he had neglected to explore the sacred writings and the Hebrew antiquities in their original language: to repress the sallies of an imagination naturally ardent, and the excitements of youth, Jerome resolved to devote himself to the severe study of Chaldean and Hebrew; he sent for one of the most celebrated of the rabbins, and, working day and night, he toiled and perspired like a galley-slave.* He formed an intimate friendship with a Jew of Tiberias, who was well skilled in the sacred languages. Except on the sabbath, the devoted master went daily to the synagogue to gather the most approved interpretations of the Hebrew text, and then communicated them to his fond disciple. It was by this means that Jerome was enabled to translate from a pure and incontrovertible text, the *Paralipomeni*, and to this it is owing that the book of Job, so full of figurative expressions and Chaldean phrases, found so exact a translator in the Christian church.†

These studies, which Jerome entered upon so warmly, were then very common among the bishops and priests, and must have tended to conciliate, in some degree, the relations between them and the synagogues. Most of the works and homilies, from the reign of Constantine to Justinian, relate entirely to the Old Testament; the most zealous defenders of Christianity drew from thence all their learning and arguments. Here, to combat the heresy of the Manichæans and the Paulicians, St. Augustin produces the magnificent description of the creation, in Genesis; here, St. John Chrysostom himself encourages the faith and trust of the believer, by reminding him alternately of the prodigies performed by the youthful David, and of the reign of Esther in the court of Ahasuerus: every virtue is enhanced by an example selected from the book of the law, and every discourse is founded on a passage from the prophets. Sometimes, however, these traditions and discourses were turned against the synagogue itself: and the observant philosopher will smile with surprise, when he learns that St. Ambrose, in order to obtain from Theodosius the revocation of the edict which

* St. Ambrose, Epist. lib. v.; Epist. 29, p. 155.

* St. Jerom. *Ep. ad Burtic*, chap. vi. *Præf. ad Daniel.*

† Compare Lightfoot, in Matt. xxvii. p. 385. and Leclerc, Quæstion. Hieronym. sect. v. vi. and vii.

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obliged the church to rebuild the synagogues which had been thrown down, quotes the august piety of Solomon, who enlarged the house of the Lord, in place of impoverishing it to re-establish idolatrous oratories. Thus, under certain circumstances, rare without doubt, but of which we find many examples in the history of the Church, the traditions of Judaism were in a manner invoked against Judaism itself. The mass of Christians and Jews would occasionally lay aside their animosities to pay homage to public virtue and universal charity; in the records we find instances of the Israelites joining in the religious procession at the funeral of a bishop, during which the priests and deacons, on the one hand, would chant the service of the Catholic church, while the rabbins would sing the psalms of the synagogue, and adore the God of Israel. Many legends likewise have carefully commemorated the discovery or removal of the remains of certain personages of the Old Testament alike revered by the Jews and Christians.

At the time when believers explored with pious eagerness the catacombs of Rome and Carthage, to discover the bloody robe, the crown, the phial, and the palm of the martyrs, they discovered under the arid soil of Eutheropolis, says Logomenus, the remains of the prophet Zechariah. A Christian slave, named Calamethus, cultivated a little garden for his Jewish master, near the village of Capturza: one day, when, fatigued by his labours and oppressed by a burning summer sun, he had laid himself down to rest under the shade of a solitary palm tree, the prophet Zechariah appeared to him: 'Go straight,' said he, 'to within two cubits of the hedge-row which borders the road to Bithen, dig up the earth at your feet, and you will find my body perfect, and untouched by time.' The slave obeyed; he quickly dug a hole, and, trembling with holy excitement, he beheld the body of Zechariah laid in a sepulchre, and wrapped in the white robes of the priests of Israel: at his feet there was a child with a royal diadem, and sandals of gold. The body of the prophet was taken up with pious reverence, and carried in triumph to Jerusalem. As the crowd, consisting of Jews and Christians, indifferently mixed together, was moving along, the elders of the church and the doctors of Israel began to dispute as to who this royal infant could be, which was found at the feet of Zechariah. The masters answered that they had read in an ancient Hebrew work that King Joas, at the instigation of flatterers, had caused the prophet Zechariah to be put to death: God, to punish him had taken away his beloved son, and Joas had built this tomb as an eternal record of his repentance and grief, and had expressly desired that the young prince should rest his head *'under the feet of the prophet of Jehovah.'**

Constantinople beheld, about the same time, the celebration of funeral rites which recalled the intimate connection which subsisted between the two religions. The Emperor Arcadius had lately ordered the ashes of the prophet Samuel to be conveyed from Judœa into Thrace: from the frontiers of Persia to the banks of the Bosphorus, entire populations had followed the sacred cortège; Christians and Jews alike had hailed its passage with songs and ceremonies of thanksgiving. On the fourteenth day of the kalends of June, under the consulate of Probus and Arcadius, the hallowed remains of Samuel made their solemn entry into Constantinople. In his writings against Vigilantius, St. Jerome has left us a description of the honours which the new church conferred upon the holy man of the old law: bishops carried his precious ashes in a golden urn, wrapped in the finest silks; the emperor, the senate, and the counts of the sacred largesses, followed on foot the funeral procession, which passed through the suburb of Stanor, where the Jews dwelt, and St. Jerome fails not to state that they hung their houses with festoons and garlands in honour of the revered prophet.*

The ecclesiastical records have also celebrated the miraculous discovery of the remains of the rabbins Gamaliel, Abybas, and Nicodemus, whose dubious Christianity was sufficient nevertheless, at this epoch, to excite the fervent piety of the orthodox. About twenty miles from Jerusalem there was a village called Caphar-Gamala, or the "*village of Gamaliel;*" one solitary church, built in the reign of Constantine, was then ministered to by a priest of the name of Lucian: he had taken up his abode not far from the baptistery, where a common mat served as a bed to his limbs, worn out and emaciated by fasting and prayer. On the third night of the nones of December, while he was keeping watch over the sacred vessels of the church committed to his charge, the legends relate that a venerable old man appeared before him; he was clothed in a white mantle, and a golden ring was on his hand, after the manner of the patriarchs and elders of Israel. 'Lucian, Lucian,' he exclaimed in a deep-toned voice, 'how long shall my ashes be neglected? I am Gamaliel of the Scriptures, that pious doctor who instructed Paul, the friend of Stephen, the first martyr of the Christian Church. When that disciple of Jesus Christ was stoned, I rescued his body, thrown outside the walls of Jerusalem, from the fangs of the ravenous wolf. I carried it to my little garden near Caphar-Gamala, and there it was buried by the hands of my son Abybas. Beside him reposes Nicodemus, the president of the synagogue of Jerusalem, where he was baptised by Christ. On his being stripped of his dignity by the doctors and Pharisees, I received him into my house. My son Abybas, who has also known the

* Baronius ad ann. 413.

* St. Jerom. *in Vigilantium*, § v.

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truth, lies in the same sepulchre, for my daughter Sarah alone persevered in error. If thou wouldst recognize our remains, cast thine eyes on these baskets I hold in my hands."* Immediately Lucian looked and beheld four baskets; three were wove with gold, and the fourth was like silver; they all contained a profusion of red and white roses in full bloom and freshness. 'These red roses,' continued the doctor of Israel, 'are symbolical of the martyrdom of Stephen, who reddened with his blood the thorns and briers of Jerusalem; the white roses are the emblems of our souls, which we have preserved undefiled from the guilt of the synagogue; and the silver basket represents the virginity of my son Abybas, for never did an impure desire enter into his heart.' After having given these pious explanations, Gamaliel vanished. Lucian soon found out the remains of these uncertain Christians, whose fidelity the synagogue has good reason to dispute with the church. They were carried to the west side of Jerusalem; a Latin epitaph, which might still have been seen during the last century in the cathedral of Pisa, pointed to the ashes of these three doctors, as reposing at the foot of the altar, and invited the believer to reflection and prayer.†

In referring to these frequent removals of remains from the East to the West, the chroniclers seldom omit recording the miraculous conversion of some Jews, accomplished by the efficacious assistance of the saints. The island of Minorca, one of the Balearic Islands, then possessed but two municipal cities, Maguntum, now called Mahon, celebrated for its harbour, and Jammona, situated about ten leagues from it. The Jews were very numerous in Port Mahon; there were a rabbin and several synagogues, and even a civil magistrate, whom the legends call Theodore. About the year 428, the remains of St. Stephen, after having remained some time on the coast of Africa, arrived at Mahon, where they were received by the Christians with all the enthusiasm of the faith. Full of confidence in the virtue of relics, the believers resolved to signalize the passage of these remains through their city by the conversion of the Jews; they therefore resolved to challenge the doctors of the law to a public discussion. The bishop was the bearer of the message to the synagogue, which was immediately accepted; and messengers were despatched forthwith into the interior to bring together all the rabbins who were deeply versed in the knowledge of the Scriptures. But the most unpropitious omens, says the Christian historian, announced the approaching discomfiture of Judaism; the master and magistrate, Theodore, related that during his sleep he had seen twelve men, dressed like patriarchs, who, stretching out their arms, exclaimed, 'Theodore, avoid the synagogue, for it is full of devouring lions!' he then took to flight, for he was seized with a great trembling; but on returning, his eyes encountered a majestic church, glittering with gold and rays of light, from whence issued the softest strains of music, and the chantings of priests and monks. As he was greatly alarmed by this dream, Theodore went to Reuben, one of the most learned among the doctors of the law, for encouragement and support; and his mother, a zealous Israelite, found some difficulty in making him adhere to the faith of Jehovah.*

While Theodore and the Jews of Mahon became alarmed at such an evil omen, the bishop, according to the legend, had a vision also to reveal to the Christian congregation. In the ecstasy of prayer he had beheld a widowed female, who entreated him to come and assist her in dressing her field: this woman was the synagogue, who drew near of herself to Jesus Christ, beseeching him to scatter the fruitful seed of the new into the hitherto barren soil of the old. The bishop, greatly edified by these promises, no longer hesitated upon engaging in the controversy with the Jews. Although these disputes on the sacred Scriptures could not be called a servile work, yet the Jews refused to begin them on the Sabbath; on the morrow, however, the Christians proceeded in a body to the synagogue, where the controversy was to be held.

Many Jews joined them on the way, and all, with one accord, sang the psalms and hymns of the prophets: just as they reached the door, a number of Jewesses, stationed on the roof of the building, less tolerant than the rabbins and doctors, commenced throwing stones at the uncircumcised crowd, who thus dared to think of entering the synagogue: the Christians returned the attack, and as they were much the more numerous, the Jewesses were soon obliged to fly. The excitement, however, was not so easily quelled, and the Christians, in place of convincing the synagogue, burnt it, and the sacred books alone were with difficulty saved. In the midst of the mêlée, the venerable Reuben, one the most esteemed among the rabbins, was seen to approach, wearing the doctor's robe, and bathed in tears. Addressing himself to the bishop Severus, he craved at his hands the cross and the tunic of the catechumen. Immediately Theodore, and the rest of the Jews who had been attracted to the scene of confusion, rent the air with shouts of 'Apostate,' and 'False Doctor,' and on the yet smoking ruins of the synagogue the rabbins and the Christian priests commenced a discussion on the splendour of Israel and the glory of the temple. While the rabbins were ridiculing the divinity of the Messiah and his absurd tenets, a sudden

* Lucian. ad omnes ecclesias, chap. xi. Baronius ad ann. 415.

† Hoc in sarcophago requiescunt corpora sacra
Sanctorum, quorum nomina dicta trium
Sanctus Gamaliel, Abybas, et Nicodemus:
Insimul ipse pater, filius atque nepos.
Wagenseil *in Sothamim*, t. v. p. 314, 315.

* Sever. Epist. *ad omnem ecclesiam*, chap. xi.

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cry burst forth from the Christians, 'Theodore, *believe* in Jesus Christ!' This ambiguous phrase, misunderstood by the Jews, was taken by them in the sense of a fact which had been accomplished, whereas it was merely an expression of impatience on the part of the Christians. The Jews imagined that Theodore actually believed in Jesus Christ, and that the arguments of the priests had succeeded in shaking the faith of their patriarch. The rabbins, the elders, and the doctors broke up and separated into the country, while the women, with dishevelled hair, exclaimed in despair, 'What hast thou done, then, wretched Theodore? thou believest on the impostor, and we are left without a stay or guide!'

Let alone, and surrounded by the Christians, Theodore, speechless, knew not what to do, or how to explain the mistake which had thus exposed him to the indignation of the synagogue. Meanwhile the Christians leave him no time for reflection, but ply him with their importunities; and Reuben more particularly, with all the zeal of a neophyte, urges and implores him to acknowledge the beauty and majesty of the law of Christ. After various internal misgivings and hesitations, the Jewish patriarch exclaims, 'Well, I believe in Jesus Christ.' No sooner has he uttered these words, than the Christians triumphantly hail him as a member of the church, and, amidst hymns of rejoicing and the celebration of festivities, the new convert is publicly baptized, and receives the fraternal embrace of a catechumen. The example of the conversion of Theodore, for reasons which were never divulged, brought many more Jews into the Christian fold; and among them were several learned doctors, and an old man who had reached his hundredth year, and whom the people compared to Simeon and the patriarchs of the Old Testament.*

MEMORIES OF GIBRALTAR.

No. I.

Whether Gibraltar be viewed as a place consecrated by antique legend, or as an enduring monument of modern industry, it is a spot well worthy of an acute contemplation, because to most persons it will present subjects of actual interest.

By its name of Calpe, the seat of the city of Heraclea, and the site of one of the far-famed Herculean pillars, it appeals strongly to the antiquarian, who will find abundant matter for speculation, in determining the whereabouts of those points of interest, especially of the latter, or of examining the probabilities of the romantic legend which declares that the rock itself, and its neighbour Mount Abyla, constitute the identical pillars raised, if not by the hands, at least by the spells, of Hercules. But to yield any credence to these fables would require a more genuine faith in the miraculous and cabalistic than persons, in this enlightened age, will be disposed to afford. It cannot, however, be denied that there is much poetic interest in the notion that the vast mass was piled rock upon rock, by the spell-fraught incantations of a mighty magician; and the great cavern of St. Michael derives additional charms from the circumstance of its having been once dedicated to the learned heathen whose name it then bore, and whose giant path to which, was carved deep through the bosom of sea-beaten rocks.

Nor do the extraordinary perforations with which the south side of the rock abounds afford less ample scope for the researches of the curious; for although the tales which attach to each, may, in most cases, prove incredible, still when regarded as outlets to the great temple of Hercules, and considered as the ancient avenues by which his followers approached the presence of their teacher to witness and to participate his supernatural studies, they are full of romantic interest.

To those acquainted with the legends of the celebrated cave at Toledo, where Hercules was supposed, subsequently to his residence in Calpe, to have taken up his dwelling-place, the resemblance between the two caverns will be strikingly manifest. Both are said to have been excavated to his honour—both to have been the scenes of his necromantic exploits; both to have extensive subterranean approaches—and both to conceal within their mysterious chambers considerable treasure.

During my residence in Gibraltar, many indeed were the attempts made by officers, both military and naval, to follow the footsteps of the brave old General O'Hara, whose exploratory researches had far outstripped all others, and who, many years before, had left his valuable sword and watch at the extreme point of his wanderings, as a reward to any courageous adventurer who should dare the dangers he had surmounted. But foul air is a fast-increasing foe, and, as far as we have learnt, the general's offering still lies embedded within the cavern, perhaps destined to stimulate the curiosity and excite the wonder of some unknown hero.

So far as a woman's researches could be prosecuted, my contemporary companions and myself have penetrated, most efficiently guided by military gallantry and pyrotechnic paraphernalia; not, however, without suffering frights and accidents enough to have deterred less courageous damsels than soldiers' daughters, but which in our case, I think, rather gave a zest to our gaiety as we grouped, chilled and dishevelled, to gaze admiringly upon the multiform magnifi-

* The bishop Severus, who wrote this account, was an eye-witness of these conversions; but he may have exaggerated the wonders which attended them.

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cence with which nature has so richly adorned that stalactite palace.

Modern art has, however, rendered the north end of Mount Calpe not less worthy of intent observation; for here, human industry, under the direction of one whom heathen mythology, had he lived in the earlier ages, would have elevated into a rival god, has hewn for itself out of the solid rock an imperishable memorial. I allude to the galleries or excavated batteries of O'Hara, which fortify the rock on the Spanish side. Viewed from the neutral ground, which they overlook, they form a gigantic representation of a first-rate line of battle ship. Internally they are huge tortuous caverns, dimly lighted at intervals by the embrasures thickly studded with artillery. St. George's Hall, a fine effective battery, terminates one range, and is a favourite arena for the picnic refreshments or dance of the parties visiting the excavations. Here are to be found ordnance stores, spiral staircases, powder magazines, and all the appliances of war, hidden within the rock—but all, in these 'piping times of peace,' less dangerous than the bright eyes that so often flash among them.

Those who have witnessed the tedious progress of perforating the rocks will be astonished that so stupendous an undertaking as these excavations could ever have been, for a moment, entertained. As they are now completed, they become a triumphant record of human patience and industry, and satisfactorily prove the power of incessant though apparently termite labours to accomplish a grand result.

For the amazing strength of its fortifications, Gibraltar has long been justly celebrated; on every side the implements of war salute your eyes, and very frequently your ears. Battery overtops battery, magazines flank stands of arms; heaps of shot, single and doubled-headed, shells and grenades, are spread around in endless variety, so that the rock resembles a huge porcupine spiked and pointed from the head to the tail.

And then, for its localities, what strange and satanic sobriquets! His demoniac majesty claims there so many extraordinary possessions, that he may justly be supposed to be lord of the manor. There are the 'Devil's Bowling-green,' the 'Devil's Gully,' the 'Devil's Bellows,' the 'Devil's Battery,' the 'Devil's Point,' and the 'Devil's Tongue,' the formidable grinning of whose teeth (i. e. cannon) assure us that a most fiery member that tongue would prove—one that would out-clamour all the shrews in Christendom.

Then for simply *queer* names, there are 'Blackstrap Hill,' and 'Tumble-down-Dick Hill,' the 'Ragged Staff Pier,' 'Beefsteak Cave,' and 'Jumper's Battery;' the last so called in honour of Lieutenant Jumper, who scaled the wall at that place, and was the first Englishman who stood on the rock as a conqueror.

Speaking of jumping reminds me, *en passant*, of an order which appeared in the general order-book while I was in the garrison, but which in later years I have heard quoted as a Joe Miller; it ran thus: "His Excellency commands that, in future, no officer will cut capers on the line wall;' alluding not, as might be imagined, to their jumping eccentricities, but to their injurious habit of cutting switches from the trees which adorn that part of the garrison. If the old governor was pleased to play the wag upon the occasion, and thus revive an old joke, I am not answerable for more than its repetition; all I can say is, that it passed current at the time, and caused some merriment.

The admirer of barbaric valour will find a field for the indulgence of his taste by a ramble up the Moorish wall which encloses the town, and by a visit to the tower and other remnants of the Moorish castle, where Taric el Tuerto, the invader of Spain, floated his banner of victory, and in commemoration of whose conquest, the Rock was called Gibel-Toric, the Mountain of Taric, since familiarly corrupted into Gibraltar.

Here the man of commerce finds the keystone of wealth—here the botanist and the mineralogist discover countless treasures to add to precious hoards, and to Britons generally it presents an enduring monument of England's glory.

A-propos of ancient things: Twenty years ago, an old Jewish woman and her daughter lived in a pretty little cottage, covered with dolichos, clustering roses, and clematis, beneath the brow of Windmill Hill. She was at that time reputed to be a hundred and thirty years of age. Her daughter was a 'giddy *young* thing' of ninety. They were allowed a dollar per diem by their Jewish brethren, so long as they walked daily to town to receive it, a distance of a mile and a half from their residence. This condition may be thought to have deteriorated considerably the value of the gift; however, it was productive of a fund of amusement to our young officers, who used to delight in watching the ambulations of this eccentric pair.

The lady was very short, and very rotund, her senses little impaired, excepting by a slight touch in her hearing, and some feebleness of step. She was round-faced and plump-featured, still showing the remains of much comeliness. She dressed with a neat propriety that accorded well with her advanced years, and stumped along, staff in hand, much after the fashion of a hale old granny of seventy.

Her daughter was a perfect contrast to her mother in every particular. She, as the old song says, was 'tall and straight as a poplar tree,' and guiltless of exhibiting any feature of present, or remnant of past, beauty. She was, however, active as a kid; dressed, coquetted, tripped, and ogled to perfection, as a blushing young belle. She generally contrived to gain some fifty paces in advance of her mother, who hobbled after, heartily inveighing against the heedlessness of youth, as exemplified in her daughter's

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behaviour: and it was truly amusing to witness the comic extravagances by which the young old damsel sought to attract the admiration of the attending beaux, who used gravely to submit themselves to mamma's admonishing, or mischievously whisper love-vows to miss.

Their extreme age, however, invested these women with a sort of romance; and the story went, that once upon a time they had penetrated into the presence of the golden-haired lady of the cavern, and had been for a period enjoined to her silent service, which they performed by matutinal offerings of fresh eggs, milk, and other delicacies; that, having won the favour of the enchantress, they had ventured to transgress their obligation, by praying from her the gift of long life—an act of disobedience so flagrant, that although their request was granted, they were from that moment banished the presence of their patroness.

An artist would have found an irresistible subject in these ancient dames; but, indeed, during the war, the quay of Waterport, and the crowded streets of the town, abounded with objects eminently pictorial. At that time, every nation of the known world sent to the garrison its native representative, and the most opposing styles of feature and expression were there beautifully contrasted. Among them all, it appeared to me that the Greeks generally, whether as regarded the natural graces of person or the artificial embellishments of their picturesque costume, were most entitled to admiration. At Santa Roque, a small town seated on a hill at eight miles distance from the garrison, I, however, beheld the most perfect impersonation of manly beauty that my imagination is capable of conceiving.

My father and myself, after a twenty miles' ride, had made a flying visit to the convent of the Cork Wood, where, while hastily partaking some very frugal fare, we were edified by the gratuitous confessions of the holy friar, who informed us that his monastery was a house of penance for transgressing brothers, and that he owed his own position there to a 'venial passion' for *aqua ardiente*. Fame likewise added, that the pious fraternity lived in the most amicable communion with the banditti who infest their neighbourhood; and if the individual delinquencies of the brothers might be considered, as oracularly delivered by their devout abbot, such a friendly relation between them was by no means impossible. Indeed, so entirely did we, after listening to the worthy prior, concur in its probability, that we were induced to terminate our visit somewhat abruptly; and it was not without a sentiment of mutual gratulation that we found ourselves once more within sight of Santa Roque, where, having alighted at an hotel, I left my father to superintend the refreshment of our weary steeds. I turned idly into a balcony which overhung the Alameida, where my attention was at once forcibly attracted to a man, who, wrapped in his ample cloak, and with his deep sombrero carelessly discovering his lofty brow, and intellectual countenance, passed moodily to and fro, within a few yards of the spot where I stood.

It was impossible to picture anything more strikingly perfect than the formation of his features, the intense expression of his coal-black eye, the sunburnt tint of the complexion, or the flexible turn of the tall muscular figure, embellished by the majestic yet unconscious grace of his deportment. He was the identical impersonation of a hero of romance—a bandit chief—a mountain king—a Coriolanus—of every wild, or picturesque, or magnificent ideality which had ever floated over a poet's dream.

Something of this kind escaped me, as I turned to thank the kind signora who modestly proffered me her attentions.

'Yes, donna,' said she, 'he is handsome, truly; but'—and she sighed—'many a blushing rind covers bitter fruit. Yet love is a sore trial—the Virgin pity him—and may be, if Diego had been a thriving wooer, his life might have been as beautiful as his looks; but when love goes wrong among us, the Spanish knife is ever too near the Spaniard's hand.'

'You cannot mean,' said I, with involuntary interest, 'that yonder godlike being is a murderer?'

'He has heard you,' whispered my companion; 'he understands your language, and his eyes are even now riveted upon you.'

My glance followed hers as she spoke, and met that of Diego fixed with a proud questioning upon me; as I turned, he drew himself to his full height, and seemed haughtily to scan my countenance. What he read there I know not—perhaps it was intense admiration, mingled with grief for his imputed crimes—for such I felt, and it was impossible to look upon him in the circumstances without so feeling. Whatever might be the interpretation he put upon the expression of my glance, his changed its character at once, and a smile only half contemptuous played for a moment over his richly rounded lips, as, dashing his sombrero deeper over his face, he loftily continued his promenade.

'Come within the chamber, donna,' said my companion, gently pressing my arm, 'for Diego's looks are dangerous; and if it will amuse you to hear his story, I will recount it to you, for no one can repeat it more faithfully.'

I eagerly accepted the kind signora's offer, and shall endeavour as nearly as possible, to give in her own words, the history of *The Avenger*.

'Diego Tenderos and Maraqueta Peublos, were neighbours' children. Yonder cottage, donna, where the white verandah tipped with the sunlight just glances out in the distance, looking bright among the vines that spread the hills behind it, was the maiden's birthplace; there she grew, among her grapes and her roses, her young life one dream of happiness. Her lambs and her birds were

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her chief care, for she had neither brethren nor sisters to share her attentions, and her father, her sole remaining parent, seemed the chief object of her affections.

'In the valley, a mile distant, lived Diego; he was older by some few years, and of richer prospects, than Maraqueta, and it was thought that he could count descent with some of Spain's proudest hidalgos. How that may be, matters not; however, in earliest infancy, as is often the custom of our country, their parents had betrothed these two, and the delight of their life was to gather stores to enrich the bridal of their children.

'When Maraqueta was yet too young to walk alone, it was the sturdy arm of the boy bridegroom that supported her; and when she grew to mingle in the bolero, the fandango, and the waltz, it was still upon his arm that she leant. So she went on loving and confiding in him as an elder brother. Not so, Diego; he loved her, donna, not as you cold northerns love, with measured prudence and careful discretion, but as Spaniards love, madly—with a passion glowing and fervid as their own sun. So loved Diego, and the gay girl was not unwilling to receive such homage.

'The preparations for their wedding were rapidly advancing; their cottage was stored, their garden stocked—for they were to be married after Lent; when, at the carnival preceding, it was Maraqueta's evil chance to meet, at Algeziras, Lopez Demanos, and from that hour all was changed.

'The love of woman, donna, is contingent upon no gift of nature or fortune; it lights upon the humblest and plainest, passing over the beautiful and the wealthy in its eccentric course. So was it with Maraqueta.

'What Diego's looks are, donna, you have seen; what they were before care and crime had blighted him, you may pretty well guess; but no one can tell the stores of fondness that he poured on his young love, no one can describe the tenderness and gentleness of his nature before the current of his feelings was all turned to gall and bitterness.

'Not a maiden that did not envy Maraqueta, not a poor neighbour that did not bless the help of Diego's ready hand; he was the pride, the ornament of the vineyards, and——'

'You loved him,' interrupted I, impulsively.

The Spanish woman looked up into my face with a strange, sad smile, and, mournfully waving her head, proceeded. 'And Lopez was greatly, greatly his inferior, every way: but Maraqueta saw no beauty in Diego; and his affluent home, for it was affluent in the eyes of the peasantry, had then no charms for her. Her heart yearned to share the scanty pittance of Lopez, and his shattered cottage was, in her fond eyes, the home dearest to her heart's wishes. She listened, then, well pleased, to the whisperings of her new admirer, and even as she was loved by her betrothed, so loved *she* Lopez Demanos.'

'And he?' I asked.

'He, too,' said my companion, 'loved the infatuated girl well, but not as loved Diego. Some said, that he gave thought to the savings of her father, and to the pretty little homestead that would one day be hers; but, in truth, Maraqueta was accounted a pretty girl, and might well have believed that she could win a young man's heart without a dowry. Howsoever that might be, he courted her secretly at first, and then he came to the Vine Cottage, and asked her openly of her father, and the girl flung herself weeping upon her parent's breast, and prayed for his consent.'

'And he gave it?'

'No; he sternly commanded Lopez from the place, and bade his daughter prepare to fulfil her promise to Diego.'

'And Diego?'

'He, donna, was away among the mountains, on a mission for the good fathers in the neighbouring monastery, and he knew nothing of what had happened in his absence; but he returned on the last night of Lent, for he was to be married on the morrow.

'It was late when he reached his home; the hills were bathed in a moonlight flood, and stillness had fallen upon the valley, for its inhabitants, wearied with toil, and with the abstinence of the season, had retired early, to recruit their strength preparatory to the sports of the morning's festival.

'Diego was weary, too, but he could not sleep until he had gazed upon the cage where his heart lay nestled. He longed to kiss the air his love had breathed, to catch one word, one tone, from lips that could but open to give him happiness; and he went forth with his guitar, as he often before had done, to salute for the last time his expected bride, with songs of love's own weaving; for thus he hoped to win the welcome that his heart demanded.

'Not a sound but his own step disturbed the deep repose of the cottage, as he unlatched the gate of the enclosure. The inhabitants slept, or Diego thought so; but he crept close, close under the lattice of his love, and laid his lips to where he thought her hand had rested, and pressed his burning brow upon the stone over which her foot had passed. Like to some holy palmer at the shrine of his devotion, so knelt that impassioned one, bending his soul in perfect adoration.

'Then he sprang up and touched his guitar; a few simple notes at first, then he poured out his tale in a wild song, common to our mountaineers.' Here the Spanish woman repeated a few words of a well-known Andalusian serenade, which, having never yet appeared in England, I have endeavoured to render into our language, and considering this an appropriate place for its introduction, I venture to insert it.

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THE ANDALUSIAN'S SERENADE.

By the side of the bright Guadalquiver,
I've wandered, my fairest, from thee,
But in mountain, in valley, in river,
Thy image reflected I see;
Maraqueta! Maraqueta! Maraqueta!
Then whisper love's welcome to me,
Maraqueta!

With the pomegranate-blossom, and myrtle,
The orange-flower woven shall be:
Thou shalt twine them, my love, round thy kirtle,
They're pure, and breathe fragrance like thee;
Maraqueta! Maraqueta! Maraqueta!
Then whisper love's welcome to me,
Maraqueta!

The spring-warblers' soft notes, while trilling
Their wooings in wood minstrelsy,
Make wild music; but thy whispers thrilling,
Is golden-harped love's harmony.
Maraqueta! Maraqueta! Maraqueta!
Then murmur love's welcome to me,
Maraqueta;

Here are gems for thy beauty's adorning,
To bind round thy rich flowing hair,
But thy face is the star of the morning,
More bright than those gifts, and more rare.
Maraqueta! Maraqueta! Maraqueta!
Then shine out in welcome to me,
Maraqueta!

'You, donna,' pursued my companion, 'who know our customs, will guess Diego's surprise when, at each fall of his melody, he waited in vain for the opening of the casement, the sign of accepted love, and to which of course he felt himself entitled; each verse fell from his lips more tremulously than the last, and a thousand painful fears rose up rapidly in his imagination, as he hung over his guitar, lost in thought. Suddenly a shadow fell upon the pathway, and then quick footsteps struck his ear. Falsehood and treachery flitted before his mind, and already he was half across the rose-field when the lattice was nervously flung back, and Maraqueta, pale and agitated, appeared within it. 'Diego! Diego!' she called; but Diego heard her not, or if he did, he was in no mood to answer, for he was stung by jealousy, and with a step of air he flew after the intruder, who still more rapidly fled before him. But now another voice, louder and sterner than Maraqueta's, joined in the shout. 'Diego, as thou lovest Maraqueta! as ever thou hast hope to call her wife, return! return, I say! Foolish boy, 'tis but the holy father who hath shrived thy mistress! return, I command you!' The speaker was the girl's father, who, disturbed by the serenade, had cautiously listened, and comprehended all. He had entered his daughter's chamber unawares, and grasped her tightly while he called; then he bent down and whispered words of counsel and menace in her ear, to which she listened in seeming obedience.

'Soon Diego returned, for he overtook not the fugitive, and he received the old man's expostulations, and Maraqueta's tardy greeting; but he felt that the words came hollow from her lips, and the hand that he pressed to his heart was cold and deathlike; and Diego looked up into her eyes, and saw tears there; and when he spoke of the morrow, a sob burst uncontrollably from her bosom; and then Diego threw up his arms, and cried despairingly, 'Is this my welcome home? this my bridal eve?'—and for the first time he knew that he was not loved.

'Well, donna, the old man would not let him depart so; but, though it was past midnight, he brought a skin of wine, and made him drink to the morning's happiness, and, jesting with him, he endeavoured to put off Maraqueta's coldness; but though Diego tried to smile, a chill had fallen upon his hopes, and a fiend was tugging at his heart; and when he parted from the cottage, he flung himself down upon the turf, and tore his hair, and beat his breast, and maligned Heaven and Maraqueta. At last he rose up abstractedly, and sought his home.

'The cotters were up betimes, and each one was attired in his festive garb; they hung fresh garlands round old Peublos' doorway, and then they turned into the town to early matins. Diego rose too, but with a heavy heart, for there was a foreboding upon his spirit, but he tried to shake it off, and hurried to the vine cottage; but when he came there all was desolate, for Maraqueta had fled in the night, and her father was away to Algeziras to demand aid from the church for the recovery of his daughter.

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'Diego hastened thither also, and soon learnt tidings that explained everything, for the loves of Lopez and Maraqueta had not escaped observation, and some he found glad to dilate to him upon the evidences of her preference. Diego grew mad as he listened, and he knelt down before the shrine of his patron saint—the shrine decorated for his wedding—and he vowed a vow of vengeance, even to the extermination of Lopez and his brethren.

'I have said that Lopez was poor—he was one of seven sons; his mother was a widow, and dwelt in the suburbs of Algeziras. Three of the brothers were married, and scattered about; two lived in the town, where they had settled to pursue their separate trades; one of these was a carpenter, the other a shoemaker; the eldest was a goatherd, and lived some leagues off in the country. Lopez was younger than all these, and worked hard as a vine-dresser, to help to maintain his three younger brothers with his mother. There were two boys, twins, and one still younger, who was the pet of the family. So, when Lopez bore away Maraqueta, they fled to the goatherd, thinking with him to secure their safety—and so they would, had vengeance slept, for old Peublos soon wearied in the chase, and returned to his desolate home, disconsolate and unsatisfied.

'Not so Diego—the light of his life had departed, the sole joy of his existence was quenched for ever; and now he had but one purpose left, but one daily thought, but one nightly prayer—and that was revenge. The blood-hound follows not with a scent more surely than did the vigilant avenger, and before their honeymoon had waned, Lopez and his bride were surprised in their mountain lair, and Diego's knife had drank his rival's blood. Not his only ——'

'Did the wretch murder the girl too?' I impatiently demanded.

'No, donna; he meant to do so, but it seems he could not, for even then love held back his hand. But Thomaso, the goatherd, was sacrificed to his oath.

'Returning like a maniac towards the town, it chanced that Pedro, the brother next in age to Lopez, was leaving it as he entered; upon him Diego sprang wolf-like, and before a prayer for mercy could be uttered, him too he slew.

'Some passengers raised a cry, and swiftly pursuit came at his heels, but his chafed blood was hot, and swifter than the wind he fled before the crowd, threading alleys, and springing walls with superhuman velocity; at length he found himself by Juan, the shoemaker's cottage; he remembered that he too was a brother to Lopez, and, flinging open the door, he stood all blood-stained and disfigured before Juan and his wife.

'Quicker than I can tell, he had told his name, his wrongs, and his revenge, and while the shuddering wife clung round his knees, and prayed for mercy, he snatched a knife from the working-stool, and struck her husband to the heart.

'"Not one shall escape me,"' he cried; again he rushed into the street, but his pursuers were upon him, and seeing no other means of escape left, he dashed down all who opposed him, and flying headlong forward, flung himself for refuge into the bosom of the blessed mother church.'

'But he was taken?' I inquired, as my companion devoutly crossed herself, and repeated an Ave.

'Taken, donna? No! do I not tell you he fled to sanctuary? The holy church spread her arms around him. Santa Maria be thanked for her grace and charity! she protects all sinners, no matter what their crimes, who fly to her for refuge.'

'You do not mean to say, my good signora, that a murderer is so protected from judgment?'

'Truly, donna, but I do though. Save us, Mary! What would be the use of the church, if she did not take care of her penitents?'

'And was he a penitent?'

'Why, yes, donna, of course he was—he confessed, and submitted himself to the impositions of the holy father, as a good Christian ought to do. Then he had little wooden crosses erected on the places where the brothers fell, to make the passers-by pray for their souls, as the church requires, and so, of course, he came into the world again a pure man, and no law in Spain could touch him. Not that he returned at once to his cottage in the valley, for he had some duty allotted him to perform. It was thought that the pious fathers required him to make a barefooted pilgrimage to a distant shrine. Some said that he was away upon a secret mission to the capital; but no one rightly knew what was the price of his absolution. However, he returned at last, and every one thought that he would forget Maraqueta and his revenge; so the widow and her surviving sons stirred not from their own roof, and thought that if they could keep out of Diego's sight he would never molest them.

'And for some days Diego wandered about, moodily to be sure, but harmlessly enough. One evening he bethought himself to visit the deserted old Peublos, or perhaps old habit drew him involuntarily to the place, which had from infancy been his accustomed haunt. So it was, that when he entered, the old half broken-hearted man was alone over his solitary meal; but he did not eat, nor move, for his gaze was sadly fixed upon his child's vacant place, and tears were streaming unheeded down his withered cheeks. He did not see Diego, nor did another intruder then, for, even while he looked, there glided in a pale and faded girl, who fell down weeping beside her father's knee.'

'Yoo weep too, signora; desist, if the story pains you,' said I, for my companion's face was bathed in tears.

'No, no, donna, no,' she said, ''tis nothing. The old man, when he saw her, flung her from him as something venomous, but Diego sprang forward and caught her to his

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breast, and when the stern father bade her begone, and threatened her with curses, Diego soothed his fury, and interceded for her; and when old Peublos seemed relenting, he seized the symptom as her pardon, and placed her tenderly within her parent's arms.

'But, donna, old thoughts, old hopes, whirled again across his brain and heart, and while he left peace once more smiling within the Vine Cottage, he rushed into the town, a blood-seeking destroyer.

'Straight to the widow's sped he, and burst madly into the presence of the terrified family.

'"I come," he cried; "I come for vengeance!" and again he grasped his murderous knife. The poor woman sprang to guard her youngest child, who hid itself within her arms. The twins clung wildly together, as if in that embrace they could escape the stroke of the avenger. Vainly they uttered prayers to Heaven and him. Diego struck them down before their mother's eyes, who, frantic with grief and terror, flung herself before the murderer, and shrieked for mercy on her last, her youngest one; but he, regardless of all, and drunk with blood and crime, drew from the dying twins his gory knife, and struck the infant boy even on his mother's breast.'

The speaker paused, for tears now choked her voice; but in a few moments she recovered. 'Again Diego fled to sanctuary.'

'But not again was pardoned?' I shudderingly inquired.

'Yes, donna, yet again. Seven times seven shall thy brother offend, and yet be pardoned, and so is the Church of Rome merciful.'

The adage that Satan can quote Scripture for his purposes is not, thought I, without foundation.

'This time he sold his cottage in the valley, and all his stock; the produce he presented to the church to be expended in masses for the repose of the brothers. To the widow he gave a sum of money, which obtained for her admission among the holy sisters at the convent of Algeziras.'

'And Maraqueta?' I inquired.

'Her father, donna, did not long outlive the events I have recounted. Maraqueta still lives. At one period she, too, thought of taking shelter among the sisterhood; but her vocation is not that way, and a strange new passion has taken possession of her heart. Perhaps it was always there, but slumbering till circumstances brought it to maturity. Had it ripened earlier, what misery and what sin might have been spared! But 'tis useless to speak of it now. No!' and my companion, sighing, dashed away her tears; 'no, 'tis all too late now. The church may pardon and receive again the penitent to its bosom, but woman's heart must break ere she can follow its example—no—no—that would be too horrible.'

'You cannot mean, surely, that Maraqueta now loves the man whom she has rendered guilty?'

'Ay, donna, there it is; but for the love of her, Diego had been pure as he is handsome. Till *she* deserted *him*, he was all innocence, all goodness. Ay, donna, there it is! may you never know what it is to be the cause of crime, nor guess the horrible interest crime so caused inspires!'

There is no doubt that a mind educated among mountains imbibes an enthusiastic wildness, which bears the colouring of romance, when contrasted with the commonplace realities of a town life; that enthusiasm is not unfrequently productive of effects startling, if not revolting; yet they are not on that account the less natural. I must, for my own part, confess to characteristics which, I conclude, date their origin in a youth passed among poetic scenery; and were I to reveal half the strange thoughts that even now, chilled as has been my spirit by the cold calculations of worldly wisdom, still bubble up, seeking the pen as their outlet, many of my readers would probably pronounce me insane; yet, alas! I am withal as sober-minded as the coldest among them, and as little disposed as themselves either to invoke sympathy for, or to depict merely ideal woes.

The annals I am inditing must not be judged by the balance of English proprieties: I write of those who naturally and religiously feel and act differently. We are all the mere creatures of circumstances—crime in one land becomes heroism in another. They who, like me, have dwelt among the Spanish mountains, will appreciate the truth of my narrative, and comprehend as I could, the glowing passions of Spain's fervid children; and such alone, I fear, will guess the terrible but chivalrous devotion which Diego's crimes had assumed in the estimation of his beloved. Nor will others fancy the strange mingling of horrid wonder and charmed interest with which a young mind received this frightful history. My remarks, however, were little flattering either to its hero or its heroine; but my sensations may easily be imagined, when on rising to attend my father's twice-given summons, and even while in the act of uttering some severe reflections, I encountered the stern looks of Diego himself, who, wrapped in his cloak, was leaning against the doorway, with an air that showed him to have been some time stationed there.

A glance revealed my alarm to my companion, who, with a smile that to me seemed out of place, tried whisperingly to re-assure me.

The Spaniard scowled upon us both, and slowly turned into the gallery.

'Fear not, donna, fear not, he will not injure you.'

'But you, signora?' I tremblingly replied; 'my curiosity has, I fear, betrayed you into an act of imprudence.'

'I am even safer than yourself!'

'As how, pray?'

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'Diego considers that he owes me restitution; for that and other reasons I am all-powerful with him.'

'May I know those reasons?' I inquired.

'Because,' said the Spanish woman, looking down with a meek curtesy, 'I, donna, am Maraqueta!'

'You! gracious powers! and this house is——'

'It belongs, donna, to a relation of mine; and then, as desirous to terminate the conversation, she cried aloud, 'Here, Diego!—good Diego! conduct the donna to her father!'

I was stunned and speechless, and scarcely had self-possession to think of extending to my companion the gratuity her attentions so well deserved. While awkwardly rummaging for my purse, she disappeared, and when I looked up I found myself alone with the murderer.

That my heart quailed with indescribable fears was not unobserved by the Spaniard, for his brow darkened; but bowing with a grave courtesy. 'Your father waits, donna,' he said, and offered his hand to assist me down the rugged steps. But to my imagination that hand was still red with the blood of the brothers, and with an involuntary shudder I recoiled from his touch.

'What fear you?' he sternly inquired; 'think you I war with women?—unless indeed,' and he peered with a meaning smile into my face, 'they were inquisitive, and then perhaps, if time and place served, I might be tempted to stop their whispering.'

The tone, the look, all conspired to shake my courage, and I felt my colour fade, but I followed him in silence. Suddenly he stopped.

'You have heard my story!' he said.

I bowed.

'You are shocked?'

I bowed again.

'Ah, you are English—your northern blood is cold—you cannot understand these things. I am not, however, a criminal by choice; and had I not been—but—pah! 'tis done! I was wronged, and I avenged myself!' and the Spaniard clenched his teeth, and clutched his knife with appalling vehemence.

'I pity you,' I tremulously answered.

'I scorn pity,' said he sternly; but you do *not* pity me—you hate, you abhor me. Yes, look at me well,' for I had raised my eyes, timidly but magnetically attracted to his countenance: 'read my features, impress them on your memory, and hate me while you look. So would I have you; for if you loved me to-day, to-morrow I should be forgotten. I know what stuff love is made of. I would not have your love, donna, fair though you be;' and a smile half contemptuous passed across his face. 'Nay,' he added, 'you need not start away; I say I do not ask your *love;* perchance if I did,' and he smiled yet more grimly, 'more strange things might happen. But,' and he grasped my arm, and gazed intently into my eyes, 'I do ask you to *remember* me. *Hate* me then, for hatred endures; it is a good substantial foundation to stamp one's image on. Good actions, like love, die and are forgotten; but crimes! crimes like mine! and the horror they inspire, will live, ay, donna, while memory lasts. Hate me, then; you do well: we two perhaps may never meet again—but you carry in your mind the portrait of Diego. Others you may and will forget, but assuredly you will remember me.'

Even while he spoke, we passed the doorway. My father was already mounted, and at a few paces distance; and before I could think or reply, I felt myself lifted in the powerful arms of my conductor, and gently placed upon my horse.

'Farewell, donna,' he murmured lowly; 'you will not, I am sure, forget Diego.'

I looked at him for a moment with strange mixed emotions; bent down my head in a farewell gesture, and put my horse into a canter; but if my readers would know the nature of my feelings, I must at once confess myself inadequate to define them. The entire incident was compounded of romance, hurry, and mystery, and the impression made upon me was correspondingly mysterious.

It was not until I had ridden some miles homeward, and the pure sea-breeze breathed refreshingly upon my spirit, that I partially recovered from the horrid spell that was upon me. Believers in the glamour of Sotland would have pronounced me bewitched—certain it is, that my imagination was most powerfully seized upon. Such a mingling of hatred and horror, and of wild, undefinable interest, surely never before possessed themselves of the same breast. Wherever I went, the power was upon me. I arranged and re-arranged all the progress of the Spaniard's passion, all the circumstances of his revenge, and not unfrequently I detected myself palliating the enormity of his crimes, or apologizing for Maraqueta's restored affection; or still oftener, and far more justly, ascribed all the mischief done to the baleful influence of perverted religious indulgences, which had corrupted and defiled a creation which else had borne the seal of consummate perfection.

Many years have now elapsed since I listened to this Andalusian history. Forgetfulness has since then kindly thrown her mantle over events once intensely interesting, and the course of time effaced thousands of tender recollections; but, even now, I faithfully recount the tale, and still more vividly recall the impression then made, strengthened and enforced as it was by my subsequent interview with its hero; and though he was to me as a dream—seen for a moment, then lost for ever—yet, like the embodied element of evil, or perhaps as the impersonation of some fascinating ideality, he stands as a thing apart on the tablet of my memory. I look upon it, and I see the Spaniard folded in his ample cloak, his broad sombrero partially raised, his hand clutching the fatal knife, and his keen eyes fixed piercingly upon my countenance; and, at this moment, so vivid

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and life-like is the portraiture, that I could pencil every lineament of his looks and attitude; and sure I am that the Andalusian's prophecy will be literally fulfilled, for to the end of life I shall remember *Diego the Avenger.*

LORD KILLIKELLY.*

BY ABBOTT LEE.

CHAPTER XL.

When Lord Killikelly left Veronese, he turned his face city-ward, and arrived, in due process of time, at the entrance of that Temple court which was so peculiarly honoured as to be the residence of Mrs. Cavanagh. The peer had no sooner entered the narrow precincts of that ancient fane, than he became aware of an extraordinary degree of excitement pervading the locality. On one side, he was most unmercifully jostled by a confectioner's boy with a square flat box of pastry on his head; on another, he was crushed up to the wall by a wine-merchant's man ramming him up with a huge basket of black bottles, and he was in most imminent danger of being run over from behind by a hand-trunk, conveying a goodly quantity of quart bottles of Guiness's best Dublin stout, all honoured, or declared to be what they were, by their own green labels. Lord Killikelly trusted that by patience and perseverance, and the endurance of a few bruises, he might possibly manage at last to arrive at the safe retirement of Mrs. Cavanagh's dwelling; but as he progressed on, the multifarious crowd increased with him, until they seemed all to jostle together at the desired haven. Mrs. Cavanagh's door was wide open, and signs and sounds of boisterous and even uproarious mirth were echoing from within. Everything seemed to have been hastily prepared for a grand festival. A plaster of Paris Hebe had been stuck up in the passage, and ordered to hold a lamp to light the numerous guests, but having been seized with some pugilistic emotion, the fair white hand had been most cruelly severed from the round white-washed arm, and, Brodie not being near, lay upon the floor crushed into little particles of whiting, and mingled with the fragments of the broken glass of the lamp, the whole being anointed with a very fine unction of whale oil. To supply the absence without leave of the Hebe candlestick, a couple of ill-favoured, ill-odoured tallow candles had been brought up hastily out of the kitchen, in sticks that certainly could not have known the comfort of cleanliness for the last six months; one of these, having broken its back, was drooping and dripping down most sentimentally, and the other, having rather too much room in its socket for its slender circumference, was waltzing round and round most particularly gracefully.

It was with no little surprise that Lord Killikelly found that the streams of people that had been pouring in had their confluence at Mrs. Cavanagh's dwelling. The confectioner's trays, the Dublin stout, the wine baskets, all came there to anchor; and, beside them, there were fishmongers' boys, with whole regiments of oysters marshalled in ranks and rows, and lobsters dressed out for a party; roasted chickens from the cookshops, and large carpets of ham spread out upon dishes; pyramids of oranges, and sacks of nuts; and, in short, all the abundance of plenty that could be drawn together, evidently on a short notice, to do honour to a hasty occasion.

It was with difficulty that Lord Killikelly made his way through this heterogeneous mob; but having done so, he was received with great state by his old friend the dirty maid, who was now wearing a perfectly new blonde cap, trimmed with white satin ribands, and looked as if she were conferring a favour in condescending to remember him at all; which, however, she did for the sake of the remembrance of some certain half-crowns which chinked very prettily in her memory.

'I am afraid,' said the peer, 'that I am come at a very unseasonable time.' The sounds of uproarious laughter were bursting on his ear as he spoke. 'Mrs. Cavanagh is engaged with company?'

'My lady will be very glad to see you,' said the maid, who seemed to think herself only second to her mistress; 'her ladyship doesn't wish to forget old friends.'

'My lady, her ladyship!' repeated the peer to himself with a smile. 'Well, who would not have a title?'

The maid took the candle that was infected with St. Vitus's dance, and which rocked round in its socket very agreeably, and paraded Lord Killikelly into the parlour, at the door of which she paused, announced Mr. Kelly in a voice of such stentorian power as instantly to attract the attention of the whole company within, which consisted of a crowd of ladies and gentlemen, such caricatures of fashion as would have delighted H. B's. heart. The gentlemen were looking fierce and fine, the ladies lackadaisical and finer. The ladies who thought themselves young, and that was the whole of them, wore their hair braided below the chin, or in curls that never stopped until they reached the waist, and could go no further; whilst the heads of the gentlemen looked as if their wigs had all gone mad, or were standing out in rebellion. It would have been impossible to have decided whether the waistcoats and stocks, or the gowns and scarves, were the most dashing: but at all events the glitter of gold, never mind its being mosaic, on the feminine side, in the shape of earrings and

* Continued from p. 128.

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bracelets, and rings and buckles, and chains, outdid the gentlemen in the line of watch-guards, and studs, and pins, and seals, and rings. Lord Killikelly was perfectly dazzled at the display, and would have retired, but the lady hostess advanced towards him with an air of so much condescension as would have made it a perfect stain upon his shield for him to have withdrawn.

'I beg your pardon for intruding, Mrs. Cavanagh,' said the peer. 'I was not aware that you were receiving company.'

'You make a small mistake, sir,' said a gentleman, an old acquaintance of ours, with a face redder and fiercer than ever, who advanced close up behind the lady, keeping, however, carefully *behind* her. 'You make a small mistake, sir. There is no Mrs. Cavanagh here.'

'Mr. Lucius Elphinstone,' began the peer.

'Another little mistake,' said the red-faced gentleman.

Lord Killikelly looked from one to the other; the lady began to simper, and lifted up a white handkerchief to her face with a hand gloved in white kid. The peer carried on his scrutiny, beginning at the lady's foot, that was in white satin, the dress white satin too; some very splendid jewels—not glass, set in—not mosaic, a new flaxen wig, and a rich real French blonde cap, trimmed—yes—with feathers and *orange blossoms.*

'I presume,' said the peer, a little glimmering of light breaking in upon his mental vision through the medium of the orange blossoms—'I presume that I am to congratulate you, madam.'

'Allow me to introduce,' said the red-faced gentleman—'allow me to introduce to you her right honourable ladyship the Baroness Omersham.'

The new baroness simpered abundantly.

'I congratulate your ladyship,' said Lord Killikelly: 'but how is this? I thought you were anxious to be the happy man yourself.'

'And whom else would I suffer to have my widow?' said the gentleman, taking courage, and, in emerging partially from behind the lady, displayed a costume that savoured mightily of the odour of newly-made wedlock, 'whom else would I suffer to have my buxom widow? But I see that you haven't heard—that you can't guess—you're quite raw—so I suppose I must elucidate and enlighten. But haven't you seen the papers to-day? If you had, you would have known that I've come in for my title and estates at last—that I'm as rich as a Jew—that I'm rolling in money—that I've married my widow, and that we are keeping it up—and that I am myself, in my own right, the real right honourable Baron Omersham.'

'I wish you joy,' said the peer, 'and congratulate you doubly—on the acquisition of your title, and the possession of this fair lady's hand.'

'Then you don't bear malice?' asked the new baron with some slight signs of anxiety.

'Not a whit,' replied the peer.

'You can't have her yourself now.'

'I must resign myself to the loss.'

'Well, then, shake hands, old fellow.'

Lord Killikelly did shake hands, and the new baron, in the exuberance of his joy, seemed to have contracted quite as great a friendship for him as before he had felt enmity. He repeatedly assured him that he was a good fellow, that he should stay and sup with them, share in their jollification, have a bed for the night, visit them every day, go down with himself and his lady to his Scotch castles, hunt with him, shoot with him, fish with him, and borrow his money; for all which offers of favour and friendship Lord Killikelly professed himself, of course, infinitely obliged.

As the first favour which he could seize upon, Lord Killikelly took the fat hand of the newly-made buxom baroness, and led her as much apart from the company as the limits of the rooms permitted. 'Mr. Wickham, madam—where is Mr. Wickham?'

'I'm sure, Mr. Kelly, that I've asked him often enough to come down. I'm sure I quite begged and prayed of him, and so did Mr. Lucius—I mean the baron.'

'And where is he?'

'Up in his own room, quite cross and sulky like. It's very disobliging of him not to come down and make one of us, and I'm sure I've been quite a mo——quite a sister to him ever since he came into the house.'

'And he would not?'

'Wouldn't! He was as obstinate as a mule; and he might have done it, because it would have looked well, as he happens to be the nephew of a real lord, and quite in our own class. It would have sounded well in the papers.'

'Never mind; you will soon have plenty of better acquaintance.'

'To be sure we shall, and, in fact, we are going next week to visit Mr. Wickham's uncle, and that was one of the reasons why we wanted Mr. Wickham down so much to-night.'

'Mr. Wickham's uncle?'

'Yes; he's a relation of Mr. Mark Phillicody, and we've promised Mr. Mark to go down to Wimbledon, and be introduced to him.'

'Indeed!'

'Yes. Mr. Mark is making up a party, and as Mr. Lucius—I mean my lord the baron—is quite one of the high aristocracy, and I am——'

'My lady baroness.'

'Yes, just so—why, I thought we might as well get acquainted with a few of our own set, more especially as Mr. Mark says that Lord Killikelly will be delighted to see us.'

'Where is Mr. Mark?' asked Lord Killikelly in some alarm.

'O here—somewhere about.'

Lord Killikelly cast rather a nervous glance round the room, but could not discover Mark in the crowd.

'I must just go up and speak to Mr. Wickham, with your permission.'

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'To be sure, and perhaps he would come down with you after all. Don't stop too long, because supper will be ready soon.'

'Your ladyship is very kind,' said the peer, internally resolving to escape Mark by slipping out of the house the moment his interview with Wickham should be over, whilst the bride, having forgotten that she was anything more than Mrs. Cavanagh during the latter part of their interview, was reminded of her importance by the peer's 'your ladyship,' and sailed back to her place with all the dignity that became her rank.

But Lord Killikelly had reckoned without his host in thinking to escape Mr. Mark Phillicody, who, with the tantalizing tact of a cat, had suffered him to reach the door before he seized upon him, and then with a spring, half harlequin and half tiger, pounced eagerly upon him. Lord Killikelly was on the first moment embarrassed how to receive Mark, for he remembered the sort of war which there had existed between them, and he knew not whether now he ought to look for peace; but his doubt was soon removed by the exhibition of a new turn in that gentleman's temper, which, being an amicable one, he thought best to receive amicably.

'Mr. Kelly,' said Mark, (so, thought the peer, my incognito is still safe,) 'I declare it's quite a treat to see you.'

Lord Killikelly could not look as if he thought it any treat to be seen.

'You cannot return the compliment,' said Mark. 'I see that well enough, and so don't try. Don't suppose I wonder at that, for, to own the truth, I have been something like a thorn in your side, though I did it on account of a stupid blunder which I can hardly now tell how I fell into; but now I'm something like our friend the new baron here—I hope you don't bear malice.'

'I suppose I must try not,' said the peer with a faint smile, 'since you wish it.'

'I do wish it,' said Mark, 'for, in sober seriousness, I like you as Mr. Kelly amazingly well. You have borne all my bantering in a very gentlemanly sort of way, and you are, upon the whole, one of the best fellows I ever met with.'

Lord Killikelly bowed.

'I don't flatter you the least in the world—not I. You have too much good sense for me to try that on, and really you would be very agreeable, what with your sense, and what with your kindness, if you were not quite so stiff in your manner to me. If you would only be a little sociable, you and I would be the best friends in the world.'

'Do you think you could help bearing malice, whatever you might find out in me?' asked the peer.

'Not a jot. I like you prodigiously—yes, you and your preux chevalier manner too; only you don't like my cavalier sort of a way at all.'

'Well, if I give over being stiff, you are to give over being tiresome.'

'A bargain.'

'But for how long?'

'Why, for ever and a day.'

'Done.'

'Done.'

'Well, now I'll tell you why I've been such a thorough-bred plague to you. I thought all the while that you were that precious relation of ours that has been despising us all his life, Lord Killikelly; but I found out my mistake, for I pestered and pestered at his door, till at last I got admission to him, and then I found that I had been wrong with a vengeance.'

'You had an interview?'

'Yes, after besieging the place, and threatening all sorts of torments, I at last got in.'

'And you saw——?'

'O yes, I saw Lord Killikelly, one of the greatest Solomons travestied that my eyes have been comforted with for a long while. I'm sure that I heartily beg your pardon for mistaking you for him?'

'You did not admire him?'

'O yes, I did. He was such a treat—such a fop—such a fool. Ha! ha! ha!'

'You were satisfied?'

'Satisfied! yes, to my heart's content; the largest heart would have been well satisfied. I promise you I made him stare.'

'I don't doubt it. You have made me stare sometimes.'

'O, our sparklings up have been nothing to the flame I put him into; and yet—would you believe it?—he had the impudence to come and visit us at Bermondsey.'

'What, that same fellow you saw at Lord Killikelly's house?'

'Yes, that same fellow—Lord Killikelly himself.'

'It was assurance!' said the peer.

'Yes, and he just set up my mother's and Phœbe's head for two weathercocks, and amused himself with blowing first one round, and then the other.'

'And your father?'

'O, he vowed he hated lords, and wouldn't even see him.'

'Mr. Phillicody is a sensible man.'

'Yes, there's something in him at the bottom, though everybody doesn't find it out. But my lord managed to make a pretty revel-rush in our family affairs, for all that: Phœbe has turned Harry Hooke off, and my mother talks of a separation and claiming a jointure.'

'Why and how?'

'My lord persuaded Phœbe that her turned-up nose and her connexions entitled her to make a great alliance; so she turned up the said nose at Harry, preparatory to looking out. And then he persuaded my mother that he could not introduce her into society unless she first *cut* Bermondsey and soap-boiling, and took a villa in the country; and as my father happens slightly to disapprove of these trifling changes in his family, we have had a good many kicks up.'

'Quite family matters.'

'Yes; but he is just getting slightly out of favour with our feminine gender at home, for all these fine things. He took it into his

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head that he would visit at the Rowlands, and there he has just managed to make a mess of it.'

'As how?'

'Why, he has offended Veronese by contriving to fall in love with her, and my mother and Phœbe happen, for once, to be offended at the same cause. "Why," say they, "could not he fall in love with Phœbe?" And then he has offended my artist uncle by finding fault with his paintings, and that you know to be a most unpardonable offence. Veronese looks as black as thunder at him, and uncle vows that he has no feeling for the arts, and can't endure the odour of his name.'

'And Mrs. Rowland?'

'O, aunt Rowland has been bought by presents of sundry veils, and scarves, and shawls, and dresses, and dozens of wine, and Westphalia hams, and tongues, and cakes, and all sorts of things; so she is pretty sweet upon him.'

'And how is all this to end?'

'I'll tell you; I've got it all arranged.'

'Why, how?'

'Hark you; I know that Lord Killikelly would be fit to hang himself if he were to receive a public visit from my vulgar mamma (mind, I don't allow anybody else to call her vulgar) and all our family tribe; so, just to cure him of family meddling, I am arranging a family visit. I have found out that Lord Killikelly is going down to his place at Wimbledon with a few fashionables, so I am making up a party to visit him too.'

'A party?'

'A party, yes; and a pretty party we shall make up from our Bermondsey house, all smelling of soap. There will be my pretty mamma as fine as fivepence, and Phœbe finer. As to dad, I don't think a steam-engine would drag him there.'

'And who else?'

'O, aunt Rowland, with her everlasting complaints, that never wear out, like India-rubber—she has promised; and I'm having a try with uncle Rowland, but that's a hard fight. He hates the sight of Lord Killikelly—says that he is worse than any Goth or Vandal—that he quizzed his paintings—that he has no more feeling for the arts than a chimney-sweeper. As for me, I am quite in favour; I've turned such a devotee to the arts, I'm descanting on lines and colouring all the day long; and I'm persuading him that Lord Killikelly has got some of the works of the old masters at Wimbledon, such wonderful uniques, that foreigners come from abroad to see them: so he is just comfortably hanging like Mahomet's coffin, and I scarcely know which way the beam will kick.'

'And Miss Rowland?'

'Is one of the most unmanageable of her own unmanageable sex; a proud, obstinate, self-willed, imperious piece of goods, that you can neither coax nor threaten.'

'Stay, stay; my conscience will not let me listen to you, for I confess myself her friend.'

'Yes, you manage them very prettily in Lisson Grove; you lead them about like lambs in silken strings. I suppose that Veronese will want to canonize you some of these days; and old uncle Rowland says that you have the finest feeling for the arts he ever met with, and that Lord Killikelly is wholly unworthy the honour of tying your shoe.'

'Do you mean to announce your visit to Lord Killikelly?'

'Do you think I would be such a fool? No, certainly, he would escape me then. No, no. Besides, the whole spice of the spree will be the taking him by surprise. The dose would not do his pride half the good, if he knew what was coming.'

'It strikes me, however, that your party will hardly be complete. Mrs. Phillicody will go?' and Lord Killikelly counted on his finger-ends.

'Yes.'

'And Miss Phœbe?'

'Yes.'

'Mr. Phillicody?'

'No.'

'Mrs. Rowland?'

'Yes.'

'Veronese?'

'No.'

'Mr. Rowland?'

'Doubtful.'

'Well, it seems to me a great pity that such a notable plot should fail. Shall we join forces? Will you take me into partnership? Shall I help you?'

'Capital! You dear old fellow! Why, I shall dote upon you as much as uncle Rowland does.'

'I must undertake the unmanageable ones, Veronese and her father.'

'You don't know all the difficulties. Veronese will not go, because Lord Killikelly presumes to admire her; Mrs. Rowland will go, because she hopes that there may be something more in it than mere flash, and she would like extremely to be mother-in-law to a lord; Mr. Rowland will not, because he is astonished at the presumption of such a man—so vain, and frivolous, and empty-headed, and having no feeling for painting—presuming to look up to Veronese.'

'I am quite of the same opinion.'

'Maugre his being a lord?'

'Notwithstanding the difficulties, I do not despair. But Mrs. Cavanagh?'

'O fie!—the Baroness Omersham;—another of the odd tricks in this game of life.'

'Odd enough, indeed; but the cards are sometimes strangely shuffled. I never believed that Mr. Lucius had any such claims either on title or money.'

'Nor anybody else. They are delighted to be of our party. The baron, with his fondness for whiskey and good cheer, and the baroness, with her rawness and *gaucherie*—they will be a couple of exquisites to take to Wimbledon.'

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'It will be a perfect treat.'

'Of course you must come too; you must have your share of the fun.'

'I would not miss it for the world. But now I want to slip away; this noise and confusion will very well cover my retreat.'

Mark's eyes were lit up for a moment with their old expression of mischief, but relented again. 'No, I won't plague you any more—I won't play the old man on Sinbad's back. Go, if you like, but be sure not to forget this day week.'

'I am not likely to forget it,' said the peer.

The peer knew pretty well the locality of Wickham's apartment, and wended his way towards it. There was a strange contrast between the riotous noisiness of the scenes below and the desolate confusion that reigned above. As Lord Killikelly ascended the stairs, shouts of uproarious revelry broke upon his ear, and when he reached the first landing he could scarcely make his way without trampling under foot as many cloaks and great-coats, and hats, and bonnets, and male clogs, and female clogs, and sticks, and umbrellas, interspersed with skeleton caps, and various articles of costume, which had been considered good enough to come in by their fair owners, but which had given place to newer and finer finery since their arrival; —so many of such like things there were, say we, as might have been the foundation of a fortune for a Jew, and the straits were made more difficult of passage by means of sundry trays of dismissed glasses, and a few broken empty bottles, and snuffer-trays, and discarded plates of orange-peel and nutshells, which had been transported there to be out of the way of the quality, until such time as those of the establishment, whose good-will and pleasure it might be to look after them, should see fit and well to call them to order:—through all these, and sundry other obstacles, did Lord Killikelly wend his way until he had safely mounted up to the second story of that old disorderly house, and stood at the discoloured door which separated him from Wickham. Here he paused and listened, but all was as silent as a churchyard, now and then broken upon by, and painfully contrasted with, the sound of some sudden strain of wassail from below. 'And to this has poor Wickham condemned himself!' thought the peer; 'he who was nursed in love and luxury. How much harder is the slow perseverance in a determined resolution, than any at once executed act of the highest heroism. A few heedless words, spoken in utter idleness and the absence of all thought, divided us. They have been the means of proving Wickham's entire disinterestedness, for he well knew that I never withdrew from him in my anger a single paltry sovereign, and yet he has chosen to starve himself, and live here—*here*—without me—unkind boy! and I, who am or ought to be, the offended party, am at last about to solicit him, instead of him soliciting me. Well—so would I have it, and it should have been sooner done, but to save him from those time-serving, mercenary Hamiltons; for, after all, I have not been angry with poor Wickham—at least not very—through any part of this affair.'

Nobody can possibly deceive us half so well as we can deceive ourselves.

Another burst of merriment from below roused Lord Killikelly from his soliloquy. 'It is high time this comedy should end,' and he tapped gently, almost irresolutely, at the door: for, in spite of all his philosophy, the peer felt a little natural emotion. No answer was returned, and he repeated his summons; still all was quiet, and Lord Killikelly, in a momentary fear that the bird was flown, gently opened the door, and walked quietly into the room.

Nothing could be more dismal than the aspect of the apartment into which he now entered. An unswept hearth covered over with cinders, an expiring fire, giving those melancholy cracklings which are like its dying groans, a carpet bag and a portmanteau lying on the floor, scraps of torn paper scattered about, and two letters, one directed to himself, the other to Veronese Rowland, lying on the table; all these things met his eye by the dim light of an unsnuffed candle that was flickering and flaring in a dirty candlestick, and showed Wickham himself seated in an attitude of hopelessness, his elbows on the table, his face buried in his hands, and everything about him announcing a careless desolation.

Lord Killikelly gulped a certain choking in the throat; he was determined not to be sentimental, and then, with a fictitious cough that effectually roused poor Wickham, exclaimed, as nearly like what he should have done in former days after a short separation, 'Ah, Wickham, my dear fellow, how are you?'

Wickham lifted up his head, and looked confounded.

'Heard you were going to make a start for the country to-morrow. Couldn't spare you just now—just come to tell you so.'

Amazement chained poor Wickham's tongue.

'Come along—haven't a moment's time to spare. Ordered your old rooms to be quite ready, and good fires to be in them. Come, Wickham, can't stay—amazingly cold here, and the candle will be out in a minute.'

The flickering light showed Wickham with many an emotion conflicting in his face.

'Come, Wickham, come—how idle you are! and you know I always was impatient all my life long, Wickham—not a word—I will not hear a word! Come, my dear fellow, come!'

As Lord Killikelly spoke, the last end of the miserable tallow candle sank in its socket, and with a puff of nauseous smoke and vapour expired. The peer instantly seized the hand of his bewildered nephew, and groped the way to the door, drawing him after him, and thus they made their way

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down the old staircase, and through the chaos of medley articles congregated on the landing, only breaking a very few glasses, and trampling on a small number of bonnets, until they reached the immediate neighbourhood of the festive scene, where the two great enlivening spirits of the world, *light* and *noise*, were reigning very powerfully. Not another word was spoken between them. Lord Killikelly felt the grateful pressure of Wickham's hand as he withdrew his own, and linked his arm instead, and thus together they walked out of that Temple court, Lord Killikelly's heart dancing with the joy of generosity, and Wickham perfectly bewildered with emotion, which confusion of mind was tenfold increased when he found himself once more seated, side by side with his uncle, by the cheerful fire of his splendid drawing-room, and once more attended by the dignified Stapleton.

CHAPTER XLI.

On the same day week, the events of which we recorded in our last chapter, there was no slight commotion in the soapboiler's mansion at Bermondsey. The house was astir betimes in the morning, and there was all the bustle and excitement, which, like a flourish of trumpets, usher in most of the transactionable affairs of life, such as weddings and christenings, and so on. Mrs. Phillicody came down, like many other fat matronly ladies in a morning, just anyhow, and Phœbe with her hair *en papilotte*, and her dress with the supernumerary hooks and eyes unemployed. The tempers of the different parties who crowded round that good fire in the soapboiler's little parlour were as various as their characters. Mrs. Phillicody was courageous on the strength of her family connexions, and feeling herself infinitely her husband's superior on that account, considered that he took a great liberty in ever contradicting her. Phœbe, of course, was her second, and ready to fight with her tongue to the last. Mark had gone off to see who were going, or not going, from Lisson Grove to Wimbledon. A plate of hot toast was swimming in butter before the fire, and had begun to fry, and another of rolls had already got rather scorched, much to the ladies' discomfiture, before the little soapboiler himself made his appearance at the table.

'Why, how late you are! Good gracious me, *dressed!*'

'Yes, dressed,' said the gentleman; 'why shouldn't I dress as well as you? Yes, and pretty figures you are with all your extravagance, and your fine this, that, and the other. I wouldn't be a fine lady one time, and a slut another. I hate a halfpenny head and a farthing tail.'

'Everybody's in dishabille sometimes,' said Mrs. Phillicody.

'I *wouldn't* be talked at,' said Phœbe.

'I wish somebody would come and catch you, miss, with your wig like a hedgehog, and your gown without a string or a button, and your shoes down at heel, all slipshod.'

'We shall be dressed by-and-bye,' said the matron.

'And why not have done it at once, and been decent?'

'It doesn't do to dress before breakfast, said Phœbe, 'it doesn't last—it doesn't stand for anything—it doesn't do. One gets quite stale.'

'Yes, and stale enough you'll be, with all your dressing, by-and-bye, miss!'

'La, pa!'

'Yes, miss, now that you've disgusted Harry Hooke, you'll not get anybody else to look at you.'

'La, pa! I'm sure I shall—plenty!'

'Lord Killikelly, says—' interposed Mrs. Phillicody.

'Lord Killikelly! pah! psha!'

'Well, but, Mr. Phillicody, where are you going to-day?'

'Out.'

'I suppose so; but where?'

'What's that to you?'

'La, pa!'

'Hold your tongue, miss.'

Phœbe shook herself, turned up her nose, and muttered.

'Where's all the money I gave you, miss, to buy your wedding finery?'

Phœbe would not answer.

'Ay, miss, where's the money, I say? ha, miss! you and your mother deserve to be taken up for swindlers, for getting money under false pretences. You got I don't know how much money out of me, and where is it now, miss, I should like to know?'

Still Phœbe spoke not.

'Have you lost your tongue, girl? you can jabber fast enough sometimes. O, you're sulky proud.'

Phœbe continued obstinately silent.

'If I were not the most patient man alive,' shouted Mr. Phillicody, beginning to rave and stamp, 'I should be in the most confounded passion in less than no time! Won't you find your tongue, miss, won't you!'

'For goodness sake, why won't you speak, Phœbe?' interposed Mrs. Phillicody. 'What's the use of having all this piece of work for nothing?'

'Pa told me to hold my tongue, and I *won't* speak,' said Phœbe.

'Well, then, don't,' said the soapboiler, seemingly as if under the influence of some fresh recollections; 'I dare say you'll jabber fast enough when I'm gone.'

'And where *are* you going?' asked Mrs. Phillicody.

'I suppose I may go where I please!' snarled Mr. Phillicody; 'you are going where you please; but go, of course, go! make yourselves as ridiculous as ever you please, and the more the better.'

'*We* are going to visit among the nobility—I suppose *you* are going among low vulgar people.'

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'I shall go when I please, and to whomever I please, and with whom I please.'

Just at this juncture, for the happy preservation of the peace, there came a knock at the door, and before Phœbe could have time to run away, Harry Hooke entered the room, looking so handsome and frank and manly, that even Phœbe could not help, in her secret heart, feeling a trifle of vexation at having thrown him away, and something amounting to chagrin at being caught such a figure. As to Harry, he shook hands very cordially with the little soapboiler, rather coolly with his lady, and only gave Phœbe a formal bow. He and his host had lately been great cronies, and the ladies could not but perceive that there was some secret between them, which made them exchange glances and look very pleased and triumphant. What it could be was impossible to guess, but there certainly was a sort of smirkingness and smilingness between them that portended something or other, and set the ladies' brains brewing to find it out. Finally, the two gentlemen went off together with many 'nods and becks and wreathed smiles,' leaving the mother and daughter grave, full of mysterious wonder as to what could be in their stupid heads, and determined, as they were too full of their own affairs to search out the matter to-day, to sift it thoroughly through and through on the morrow; after which they proceeded to dress in the grandest possible style, falling into the mode of some country ladies, who generally contrive to put six things on in the stead of one, so that they may be half-a-dozen times finer than other people; and having accomplished this purpose all in due time, they were likewise in due time joined by Mark, with the news that the artist Rowland, with his wife and Veronese, had all set off for Wimbledon before his arrival, having thus stolen a march; and in due time it was announced that the baron and baroness Omersham were at the end of the court, and that their own carriage, which nobody was to know had been hired, was likewise there; and so, after the slight hindrance of the baron's getting out and begging a little whiskey and water, because the cold had made him thirsty, and the baroness just being over-persuaded to take a thimbleful of brandy to keep the cold out,—after these trifling hindrances, they all got into their vehicles, with all the *éclat* of a mob of chimney-sweepers and pot-boys around, and having only occasion to return twice; once for Mrs. Philicody's reticule, and once for Phœbe's eau-de-cologne, that young lady never embrocating her handkerchief until three minutes previous to entering a dwelling, for the sake of her sweetness being fresh; the party was at last, we say, all happily in cavalcade for Wimbledon.

CHAPTER XLII.

Joyously rang out the bells of Wimbledon church. The day was as fine as day could be; and blessed, they say, is the bride that the sun shines upon, and the sun was shining on a bride in Wimbledon church. Rebecca, our old friend Rebecca, stood at that altar in tears—tears the sign of a full heart, of strong emotion, for the happiest bridal must often involve the deepest feeling, and be embalmed and sanctified with tears. For ourselves, we should not love a smiling bride. There, we say, stood Rebecca, her eyes dim, her limbs tottering, her cheek pale, all her senses in confusion; and there by her side stood Paul Burnet, the young clergyman, calm, composed, manly, as if perfectly satisfied and happy, and without a single doubting thought of the wisdom of the action he was doing, but with an air of gentle soothing tenderness towards her with whom the future mazes of this life were to be trodden, with whom its pleasures and its pains were to be shared, which she rather *felt* than *saw*. It may be a sad fancy, but we have sometimes thought that marriage to a woman was something like death—"a bourne from whence no traveller returns"—the same unknown future—another new existence—the same uncertainty—But away with the sorrowful! there is enough of that in life, and on with our tale.

Notwithstanding our own dismalness, never was a happier bridal, nor one entered into under happier auspices, than that of Rebecca Warwick and of the Reverend Paul Burnet: what though a tear or two rolled down the cheeks of two of her bridemaids, our old friend Grace and our loving Susan, for can sisters give up a sister, and know that they are supplanted by another who shall be nearer and dearer, without a tear? yet, nevertheless, and notwithstanding, never was a blither wedding. It was a white wedding, because Lord Killikelly liked white weddings. There stood Rebecca in her white silk dress, muffled up in swansdown, but without any orange blossoms; and there stood behind her two sisters, and Veronese Rowland, all acting as bridesmaids. Yes, Veronese was there holding the bride's white kid gloves. And side by side with her, behind the young clergyman, stood Walter Wickham, acting as brideman, and looking as differently from the Walter Wickham of our late acquaintance as misery and happiness can look, and there too was Lord Killikelly to give the bride away—and he was the happiest of the happy, for he was enjoying that highest and purest of all pleasures upon earth, the joy most like the joy of divinity—he was in the act of making others happy. But everything gets over in time, the happiest and the saddest things, and so at last that was over. The officiating clergyman had gone over his sonorous part, the bridegroom had said his say calmly and clearly, and Rebecca had spoken so as nobody could hear; and so at last that was done that could not be undone, if anybody had wished it: but nobody did wish it. The bride wiped her eyes and took back her gloves; the bridesmaids dexterously whisk-

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ed away the diamond globules that were running to waste down their cheeks, and began to smile; everybody shook hands with everybody, and they all congratulated each other; and the pew-opener who brought the hartshorn was sent away, that not being wanted; and finally, after signing names in a monstrous large book, some of which were signed in the wrong places, and one of which was to be signed no more, they all got into some very handsome carriages, which were standing at the church door—the new-married pair, of course, first and together; and after being well gazed at by as many inquisitive eyes as could manage it, round rolled the wheels and off they went, leaving only traces on the memory and tracks on the road behind them.

Well, sure enough there was a very magnificent breakfast spread out for them on their return, at Lord Killikelly's mansion at Wimbledon, quite in an old fashioned style of plenty, and a cake of no very stinted dimensions; and there was Mrs. Burnet, the young clergyman's mother, whose feelings would not allow her to go with them to the church, who blessed her son, and received Rebecca as her daughter; and there were uncle and aunt Rowland, who wished them all sorts of joy, and everybody was, ah! so happy, that they were only afraid it would not last.

'And now,' said Lord Killikelly, 'am I quite and cordially forgiven for all my deceptions and misdemeanours among you?'

'Ah, forgiven is not the right word,' said they nearly all and at once.

'And you, my dear sir!' said Lord Killikelly to the artist, who looked somewhat sorrowful and disappointed.

'I seem to have lost a friend,' replied the artist. 'I care but little for your rank—what are lords to me? You will now never come any more and chat with me whilst I am painting—no, no, we shall never more talk together of the arts in our old sociable way again.'

'I should be very unhappy if I thought we should not. But listen to me—I have a plan to propose. I hope you will not think it selfish; but you know we are relations as well as friends, so I count upon your kindness. You would confer an everlasting favour on me, if you would enter into some arrangement with me to go down to my seat in Westmoreland, and exercise your genius in some works of art to adorn the place—something that may be handed down to posterity—things that may make the place noted. I should feel it my interest as well as my duty to make you and Mrs. Rowland as comfortable there as possible. Of course you would have your own suite of rooms, and all that.'

The painter's face brightened up; Veronese saw through the whole, and was starting forward to interfere, when she felt herself held firmly back by the hand of Walter Wickham.

'Of course,' resumed Lord Killikelly, 'it is my interest to keep your works in the family, both for the honour as well as for their intrinsic value; and though it would be out of the power of any single individual, unless perhaps of a crowned head, to offer you anything like a fair remuneration for your valuable time, yet still such as I could give——'

'It is not that, it is not that!' exclaimed the artist; 'it is the having our works appreciated—appreciated—and people are such Goths and Vandals—we are quite in one of the dark ages. I should like it; I should like to do something for my family—something worthily—for posterity; but I should never see you by my easel there.'

'On the contrary, I should be there at least six months in the year.'

'Matthew! Matthew!' nudged and whispered Mrs. Rowland. 'Don't be a fool! don't hesitate. Why, we shall be master and mistress all the time he is away.'

The artist did not hear the whisper. He understood only that Lord Killikelly had said that he should have six months of his society.

'I shall be so happy—and Veronese will be so happy—and she shall help me—she paints very prettily—has such a fine feeling for the arts.'

'Then it is a bargain?' said Lord Killikelly, and 'a bargain,' responded the artist: whereupon they shook hands very cordially, and if that was not the first, it was certainly the best bargain that ever the painter made in his life.

As to Veronese, she struggled to interfere, but Walter Wickham proved to have a particularly strong grasp; and as she did not very well like to show her temper on this holiday occasion, or to let Wickham see any of those black looks with which she had been in the habit of favouring the fictitious Lord Killikelly, having a slight idea that they were not truly becoming to her complexion, why, she lost time in the contest, and the affair was settled without her having been able to put a word in to the matter; and afterwards, when it was all over, and she saw her father looking more satisfied and happy in the acknowledgment and recognition of his genius than she ever remembered to have seen him, and full ten years younger, and perceived that her mother had, for a while at least, lost that discontented expression of countenance which habit had made a second nature, why then, we say, Veronese could only give up the matter with a sigh.

'That sigh is treason to our general happiness,' said Wickham, 'and an especial injury to myself.'

'Why so?'

'Because my uncle installed me into the office of your guardian sprite to-day, and charged me to see that you were happy.'

Veronese, without knowing why, began to feel herself very disagreeably confused, and her guardian sprite, instead of seeming injured, appeared to be perfectly well pleased and satisfied at the circumstance.

'This arrangement makes me very happy,' resumed Lord Killikelly. 'We shall be quite a family party. Mr. Burnet and my

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dear cousin Rebecca are going to take possession of their new parsonage—the living is attached to my estate, and Mr. Burnet is kind enough to fill it. Even when there is the will, how seldom do circumstances favour our particular plans and inclinations so much! Perhaps in a fortnight's time you could all be ready—Grace and my little Susan go to take care of me, and Mrs. Burnet goes to take care of them. Do you think, my dear Mrs. Rowland, you could manage to be ready?'

'O, in less time, thank you, my lord.'

'That is very kind. And you, my dear Veronese?'

Veronese blushed and hesitated.

'O, I dare say you have a great deal to do—get Wickham to help you,' said Lord Killikelly, with a sort of merry mischievous laugh; and Veronese began to consider whether or not she should be offended, when everybody beginning to laugh, she thought she might as well laugh too. Very fortunately, however, just at this moment the pompous Stapleton entered, and announced visitors, which visitors were none other than Mr. Phillicody, the soapboiler of Bermondsey, and Mr. Harry Hooke.

The little soapboiler looked at first very shy and disposed to be restive, glancing his eye uneasily round the spacious apartments, and seemingly measuring himself with the loftiness of the room, and looking most particularly invidiously at the tall Stapleton; but these symptoms of discontent vanished as Lord Killikelly approached with a frank and open air, and, shaking him cordially by the hand, bade him heartily welcome. 'This is very kind of you, Mr. Phillicody,' said the peer; 'now we are quite a family party. I told you, you would find all your old friends here. I wanted it to be complete, and I feel really obliged to you for accepting my invitation. You know I have often lunched with you, so it is but fair of you to give me an opportunity of returning your hospitality.'

'Why, my lord,' returned the little soapboiler, 'those seem to be quite old times; and I did like you when you seemed to be nobody but good-natured, kind-spoken, honest, straightforward Mr. Kelly, with not a bit of nonsense about you.'

'And won't you like me now?' said Lord Killikelly, stretching out his hand with a smile; 'am I altered in anything but a name, and you know "what's in a name?"'

'Why, I don't think you are,' exclaimed Mr. Phillicody, and they shook hands again upon the strength of it much more cordially than before. 'I don't see that you have a bit of pride. As different from that other fellow that pretended to be you, as a church from a wheelbarrow. Goodness! what will Phœbe and the old woman say when they find out what a couple of fools they are? I'm in great hopes that it will cure them of the disorder called folly all their lives long.'

'I hope we shall all be the wiser for our various lessons,' said the peer; 'and we must not be too severe; because, after all, had I not taught my valet to personate myself, he would neither have had the opportunity nor the daring; so I have still myself in a great measure to blame, and I must even divide the fault with him. But where are your ladies? I hope they are not far behind, for we are wishing for our dénouement before we take our wedding-breakfast.'

'O, they will be in a hurry enough to get here, never fear!' replied the soapboiler; 'after we came away, they had nothing to do but to dress. They'll be sure to be here soon enough.'

'And did they suspect nothing? Were you able to keep our secret?'

'Keep a secret! I'll match myself against anybody for that! Catch anybody getting anything out of me!'

'You are a married miracle,' said the peer.

'O my lord, there's no difficulty in keeping a secret after you have been married a twelvemonth.'

'And Mr. Hooke?'

'O, Hooke's true blue. Besides, he and Phœbe are not friends. Your representative turned her head—made her whistle Harry off—told her she must have a lord—carriages—country-seats—settlements—I don't know what! I wish I had him under my care.'

'Perhaps, as the counterfeit Lord Killikelly did the mischief, the real one may be able to rectify it; at least I must try. We will endeavour to put things on their old footing for Mr. Hooke, and he must promise to bear no malice.'

'O, my lord, not I. We can settle old accounts afterwards, and leave them to bear interest till then.'

'Ah, Rebecca, do you hear that?' said the peer; 'there's a threat to be uttered in the presence of a bride! Don't you feel quite frightened?'

But Rebecca only looked at the young clergyman and smiled; and he looked at her and smiled too, and she didn't look frightened at all.

'And Mr. Mark?' said the peer; 'my old friend and my old plague, Mr. Mark, have you escaped his vigilance?'

'Yes, we've tricked Mark, you and I together, my lord. Mark was so busy looking after other people, that he quite forgot to inspect his old dad at home. O yes, you and I have done it nicely. Mark has not the least idea that that fellow, your servant, is not you yourself, or that you are yourself, and he has nothing in the world in his head but plaguing my lord with bringing him a lot of vulgar visitors to be ashamed of, thinking too that he shall cure him of meddling, and them of running after lords. He will be here directly with that whiskey-drinking, oyster-eating Baron Omersham and his new-fangled baroness, and Phœbe, and my old woman, all as fine as fivepence. Ha! ha! ha! what fun!'

'And after this little bit of malice in re-

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turn for all the trouble Mr. Mark has given me, we must be friends.'

'O just as you like, my lord. I'm sure I shall always be glad to see you at Bermondsey to eat your lunch with me, or a snack for supper, or a bit of dinner, pot-luck, any time; only don't turn Mark's head. But pray what have you done with that rogue of yours? won't he smell gunpowder, and balk us, seeing us all here?'

'To guard against that, I sent him on an errand to town last night, and he has returned only within the last five minutes, even since your arrival, and I have, through Stapleton, sent him a commission, which will occupy him at the other end of the house until I think proper to send for him.'

'Limed all the twigs—spread all the nets—caught all the birds,' said the little soap-boiler, rubbing his hands with infinite satisfaction.

'And now come and wish our newly-made bride here joy, and shake hands with all our friends.'

So Mr. Phillicody and Harry Hooke, in the highest possible spirits, and the best possible humour, began to shake hands very heartily all round, and to wish more joy than ever was on this earth to the bride and bridegroom; and they had scarcely got through one quarter of their good wishes, before it was signified to Lord Killikelly that his expected guests had come, on which he sent a message to Ravel, purporting that he wished to see him after his journey.

This message Stapleton delivered to poor unsuspicious Ravel with his usual dignity, and without a single inflection of voice that might have proved a warning of the mine that was springing under his feet. Ravel obeyed his lord's summons, without attempting to escape the threatened danger:—so much for presentiment.

That fine old noble apartment in Lord Killikelly's mansion at Wimbledon would have made out a pretty picture, with its lofty windows, its rich ceiling, its carved cornices, its splendid hangings, its masterly pictures, its sumptuous furniture, and there, looking small from its spaciousness, stood the chief personages of our drama, all in a group under the sunlight that was joyously streaming in through the stained panes of the emblazoned window, whilst simultaneously there entered Mrs. Phillicody and Phœbe, evidently a great deal abashed at the grandeur of the place, the Baron and Baroness Omersham, with Mark, like another Puck, hovering round them; whilst at the opposite door in walked Ravel.

The newly-arrived party and Ravel came to an instant stand opposite to each other. Ay, sudden detection is like a thunderbolt. We pity the wretch who has anything to hide. Ravel's eye, more used to the localities of the apartment, took in all its occupants at a glance. He saw his lord, the Rowlands, the Phillicodys, Mark, everybody that could bear witness against him.

Poor Ravel looked libraries.

'Ah, my lord, how do you do, my lord?' began Mrs. Phillicody; 'we thought to give you a pleasant surprise, my lord; so we came down quite in a family way to give you a morning call, my lord.'

'What a nice place you've got here, my lord!' said Phœbe, sidling up to the other side. 'I wonder you ever came to see us at Bermondsey.'

'Hush! don't mention Bermondsey. Don't be vulgar, Phœbe.'

Phœbe gave herself a shake and a flounce, and muttered, 'Who's the vulgarest, I should like to know?'

'A very fine place, my lord, a very fine place,' said the baron; 'something like one of my castles in the north, I should think, though I haven't seen them yet. Shall be very happy of your lordship's company there.'

'My dear,' said the baroness, pulling her lord by the sleeve; 'I say, Lucius, I must have some pictures like these.'

'You shall, my dear, you shall; we'll have some painted exactly like.'

'And we brought our friends with us, my lord,' resumed Mrs. Phillicody, 'because they're people of rank; we wouldn't have done such a thing else, and we thought you ought to know each other, and they're very nice people indeed. The Baron Omersham, our relative, Lord Killikelly; Lord Killikelly, the Baroness Omersham.'

Still Ravel stood a mute petrifaction.

'We knew that you would be so delighted to see us,' said Mrs. Phillicody.

'And we thought we ought to return your visits,' said Phœbe; 'it's so rude not.'

'But we took care to come genteel, so that you might be proud of us, rather than ashamed,' said Mrs. Phillicody.

'And they are a real baron and baroness,' said Phœbe.

'But you haven't spoken a word,' said Mrs. Phillicody.

'You are glad to see us though, a'n't you?' said Phœbe.

'I wish you were all—' exclaimed Ravel, drawing a long breath.

'All—what—where?'

'At the bottom of the sea!' said Ravel, in a state of desperation.

'Ha! ha! ha!' laughed Mark malliciously.

'What! ashamed of us! ashamed of your own relations! Phœbe, what would your papa say if he could hear that?'

There was a little choking laugh came from somebody in the crowd beneath the painted window.

'Why does not he manage you better? why does not he keep you at home?'

'Phœbe! Phœbe! let's go away! Don't let us stop a minute longer to be insulted. A base, deceitful man!'

'Ay! go! go!' exclaimed Ravel, who, finding himself thus pent up in a corner, turned upon his pursuers, like some chafed animal:—'Go home, with my compliments, and tell your husband to keep you there.'

'Phœbe! Phœbe! come, come! If ever I

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set my foot in a grand house again, or speak to a great body, I wish I may—that's all. I'm sure we've plagued and fretted your poor papa enough for such an ungrateful—base—' (sob, sob, sob.)

'Hark you, my lord,' said Mark, 'I have a cane in my hand, and were it not for the good that I hope you are doing, I would—'

'And so would I,' said the little soapboiler, *sotto voce*, in his corner.

'Go home!' said Ravel, with the most bitter malice. 'Go home, mend stockings, make puddings, and scrub the floors!'

'Your papa wouldn't have said such a thing!' said Mrs. Phillicody.

'You're not fit to wipe my papa's shoes!' exclaimed Phœbe.

'They are not quite such fools, after all!' said the little soapboiler to himself.

'Pretty usage indeed!' said the baron; 'I tell you what, sir—'

'O no, Lucius! no, don't, Lucius!' screamed the baroness, throwing her no-little weight upon his arm.

'Enough of this,' said Lord Killikelly, advancing; 'I cannot see these ladies insulted in my own house. Baron Omersham, and you, Mr. Mark Phillicody, it is my place to protect both them and you from every species of injury whilst you are under my roof. Leave the room, sir,' speaking sternly to Ravel. 'Had you not uttered this insolence, I had determined to forgive your other presumptions for the sake of my own first share in your transgressions, and for the harmony of our present happiness. Leave the room, sir!'

Ravel, white with rage, and with lips frothed up by passion, got to the door, and then turning round, with eyes that glared over the whole group, exclaimed, '*I hate you all!*' and passing out, clapped the door behind him with a sound that reverberated even through the solid masonry of that substantial building.

A moment of pained silence succeeded. Evil wishes, even if they do no more, affect the heart where peace should sit enthroned. Lord Killikelly was the first to speak.

'Mr. Mark, I owe my first explanation to you. Your early suspicions of me were just—I am Lord Killikelly. The man who has just left the room is my servant. When you so perseveringly sought to discover my secret, the time was not ripe, and I could think of no other means of escaping your discernment than by palming him off upon you as myself. And now I plead our late contract: I am not to be stiff, and you are not to be tiresome; so ran our bargain.' And Lord Killikelly held out his hand to Mark.

'There is no resisting you. Everybody must see that you are the true nobleman.' And Mark shook hands with the peer both cordially and respectfully.

'And now, my dear madam,' said Lord Killikelly, turning to Mrs. Phillicody, 'allow me to welcome you most heartily to my house.'

'I'm sure I'm much obliged to you, Mr. Kelly—my lord, I mean,' sobbed out that lady; 'but, if you please, I'd rather go home to my old man.'

'You shall go home *with* him, but not yet;' and the little soapboiler, in whom natural affection could no longer be restrained, in a minute more had clutched hold of his wife, and she was sobbing, and he was comforting, and they were better friends together than they had been for many a long day.

'And now, cousin Phœbe, are we not very good friends, you and I?' said the peer.

'If you please, my lord,' said Phœbe, more modestly than she had spoken for a twelvemonth past.

'If so, will you not for my sake, or rather for his own, which perhaps may satisfy him better, restore an old favourite to favour?' And Lord Killikelly presented Harry Hooke.

'La, Phœbe, yes, to be sure; you can't do better,' said Mrs. Phillicody.

'No more nonsense, Phœbe,' said the little soapboiler.

So Phœbe having, at least temporarily, turned over a new leaf of submission, shook hands with Harry Hooke, and blushed a little.

'And now, my lord baron, allow me to tell you that I am very glad to see you.'

'I'm very much obliged to your lordship, but I really am perfectly moon-struck. Are not you, widow?'

'*Widow!*'

'My lady baroness, I mean. There! I'd quite forgot we were married!'

'And you, my lady baroness,' said the peer; 'you are truly welcome. You and I are very old acquaintance.'

'Well, only think! I never —' said the baroness.

'And now all of us to our wedding-breakfast,' said Lord Killikelly, 'and I hope with good appetites after all.'

And so down they sat, and never was a merrier breakfast. Some had the great joy of being made happy; others had the greater joy of making them so, and surely none had higher claims upon this ground than our own Lord Killikelly, who, as he sat at that board and looked around him, felt his bosom's lord sit lightly on his throne. Rebecca, the new bride, sat at his right hand, and yet, sooth to say, she turned her face much more frequently to her right hand than her left, for there sat the young clergyman, with a face full of such radiant happiness, as can only be concocted out of love and goodness; and next to him sat his mother, happy in him, in her, in them all; and her quiet placid countenance was well contrasted by Phœbe's Roxalana-like style of face, with her long ringlets, her *retroussé* nose, and her black coquetish eyes, who sat next to her flirting with Harry Hooke, who was stationed at her elbow, to her own heart's full content, and that was extravagant enough; and next came the Baron and Baroness Omersham, dressed out most splendiferously, and revelling in the honey of the first married moon; and next was the artist in a revery, painting pictures

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for Lord Killikelly and posterity in his mind's eye, and his lady, who had for a while forgotten to be ill and discontented; and there was Veronese in her bridesmaid's attire, looking almost like a bride, and Wickham at her elbow, insinuating what he would insinuate when they were all down at the seat in Westmoreland; and there was Grace, quiet and beautiful Grace, and loving and loveable Susan, speculating upon how soon they should have to be bridesmaids again; and Lord Killikelly, for we have made the circle and have come to him once more, thinking that if Wickham were happy, and Veronese were happy, they might as well be so in partnership as in any other way, and that having such a nephew as Walter, he had no occasion to look out for any other heir.

And now, dear reader, in the good fashion of old times, we bid you farewell. There is something sad in the word, but we have not written with an endeavour to make you sorrowful, and we will not begin now. And yet is there something that creeps into the heart in the words *the last time*. It is 'the last time' that his biographer will intrude Lord Killikelly upon you. The faults of the narrative none know better than ourselves; they are subjects for you to exercise your charity upon and to forgive. We bid you a kind farewell. May the best things of this dear world be yours, for dear it is and must be to all our hearts, since our Maker has made it the *home* of our affections, and a home chosen for us by such a Being cannot be less than happy, if we do not sour it by our own ill temper, or shut our eyes upon its uncounted blessings. Dear reader, go, and good betide thee, only as thou goest, say for the author, 'Thine own wish, wish I thee.'

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THE METROPOLITAN.

No. CXXI.

MAY, 1841.

THE BLUE BELLES OF ENGLAND.*

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XIII.

AN ENLIGHTENED LADY AND A BLUNDERING COACHMAN—THE NOTE-BOOK OF A WOMAN OF GENIUS—THE PARK.

It was on Sunday, in her way to Hyde Park, that Lady Dort suddenly bethought herself of the beautiful girl who had produced so much sensation at her last party, and whom she was therefore determined to secure for her next; and suddenly pulling the check-string, she thrust forward her plumed head from the window, and cried, 'Drive to Mrs. Hartley's.'

'Where does she live, my lady?' demanded the coachman.

'Heaven and earth, man, how should I know?' replied his energetic mistress. 'You must find out, John!—you must, indeed—I must positively go there.'

'Directly, my lady?'

'Yes, John, directly.'

The coachman attempted no remonstrance. He had lived two years with her ladyship, during which period he had learned to know that the ardours of bluism are not to be subjected to any of the vulgar laws which influence the doings of ordinary people. He therefore drew up to the side of the street, and making a signal to the footman to descend, desired him to go into the porter-house before which he had stationed himself, and inquire if they knew a family of the name of Hartley. 'No,' was the answer given to the footman, and 'No,' was the answer passed on to the coachman.

John tapped at the front window of the chariot, which was immediately let down. 'Does your ladyship happen to know in what street, or in what square, or maybe, near what square the lady lives?' said he, dipping his head, and pinching his hat.

'It is not like you, John, to ask me such a question as that,' replied Lady Dort, in a voice that seemed as if she were going to weep. 'Should I not have told you at once, if I had known anything about it? Now, don't be stupid, John, *pray* don't! She is a widow, and has a thousand daughters, I believe. Try Baker street, if you will.'

John drove to Baker street, and carefully addressed himself, through the organs of his brother huntsman, the footman, to every porter-house that touched upon it—but in vain. The coachman shook his snow-white head, and sighed. Remonstrance he knew would be vain. He felt that he had nothing to trust to but his own genius, that of his lady being, beyond all question occupied on much higher matters than discovering the position of a place to which she was determined to go. At length a bright thought struck him; he drove to the door of a stationer, and then once more venturing to solicit the attention and experiment upon the patience of his sublime mistress, he succeeded in making her again let down one of the front glasses, while he said,

'Could your ladyship be so kind as to tell me if the lady's name begins with a hay?'

'A what!' exclaimed Lady Dort, almost with a shriek.

'A *hay*, my lady; 'cause if we know the first letter, I'm thinking that our best course would be to get open this here shop-door, though it be Sunday, and beg, as a favour to

* Continued from p. 208.

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your ladyship, that we might take a look at the Guide—the Directory, my lady.'

'Gracious heaven! and so bring the Suppression people upon me for a breach of the sabbath! John, you certainly are determined to drive me mad. Home! home! thou *Jehu* most profane!—I know I have her on the list.'

These words sufficed to settle the coachman again in a proper professional attitude upon his box; and lightly touching the netting which enveloped the right ear of her ladyship's off-courser, he seemed determined, by the pace at which he drove back to Curzon street, to atone, by prompt obedience to an intelligible command, for the sin of hesitation respecting its incomprehensible predecessors.

Lady Dort settled herself also in her wonted corner, and thrusting the uncut volume she was perusing into the front pocket, her mother-of-pearl paper-knife marking the page to which she had reached, she drew forth from the same receptacle an ample note-book, in which she inscribed the following words, with as much steadiness as the rapid movement of her equipage would permit.

'HAY! "Does her name begin with a hay, my lady?" Exquisite John! how do I honour thee! What are all the commentaries of all the critics compared to thine! Immortal bard!' Here her ladyship paused, and after a moment's meditation drew her patent pencil across the word *bard*, muttering as she did so, 'No, not *bard*. Should I chance to read this note *en petit comité* to those who love to learn my thoughts on all things, some critic ear might likely find amiss such use of the all-sacred name for ever wedded to immortal verse! Not *bard*, great STAR! I must not call thee bard, albeit thy new-born fame—new-born in every sense—may match itself with the loudest of our day. Yes, STAR is the fitting word;' and hereupon her ladyship wrote 'Star,' but having done so, paused again; for Lady Dort was essentially a woman of genius, and never thought it necessary to continue a flight of fancy in one direction, if anything 'beckoned her soul,' as she called it, to another. Thus, having written STAR, she looked at the word, and idly dropped her pencil hand that she might muse upon it. Then with a sort of smile which was very usual with her, and which she always thought must be exactly such a smile as *Jaques* was wont to smile in the forest of Arden, she resumed her mutterings and said,

Yes, truly, STAR thou art; and though thy rising, probably, was in the East, thy light has reached unto the West, young man—yea, even to May Fair! But deem not this a sign that thou art near thy setting. Say rather thou hast reached the culminating point; for is not May Fair, *West End* though it be, the zenith to which all literary luminaries seek to climb?' But this thought, being too good to lose, was immediately jotted down, being scribbled transversely on the page, as was the habit of her ladyship, who was wont to declare that in her moments of *intellectual indulgence* the trick and manner of the 'paper-saving Pope' were exactly her own. Nothing certainly could be more strongly indicative of the charmingly erratic nature of Lady Dort's faculties than the aspect of the Sibylline leaves of her note-book, nor was she altogether unconscious of the *prestige* which ever accompanies effusions so evidently spontaneous; for not unfrequently did she indulge her friends with a peep into her 'Museum of Ideas,' (it was thus the book was lettered,) and when she did so, there was something peculiarly fantastic, and very prettily playful, in her manner of turning the page, and turning her head, and twisting her neck, and raising her eyebrows in wonder at her own wild wanderings. Willingly, indeed, if the printer's types permitted, would I endeavour to give a page of these precious tablets, so as to suggest to all, who, like Lady Dort, are full and running over with thought, how to

'Catch it ere it fall to ground.'

But to proceed. Lady Dort having written down her mystical meditations concerning the zenith of stars 'visible at London,' pursued, both with thought and pencil, the subject of her coachman's practical commentary on the writings of the person she had apostrophized, and proved most completely to her own satisfaction that John's having asked 'if Mrs. Hartley's name began with *a hay*,' was evidence unanswerable of the exquisite truth to nature of his delineations. 'This, this,' she wrote, with the rapid penmanship of genuine enthusiasm, 'this establishes, and for ever, his close resemblance, and close approximation too, to our immortal Shakspeare. For wherein lies the strength of Avon's swan? Is it not in his power of delineating NATURE? And is it not the same with our new star? Does not he, too, copy Nature? Who dares receive it other?—Yes, great ——'

But here the carriage stopped with a sudden jerk at her own door; the information required was immediately obtained, the equipage again set in motion, and ere the ideas of her ladyship could again settle themselves sufficiently for her to resume her pencil, she found herself before that of Mrs. Hartley.

'Who am I to ask for, my lady?' demanded the footman, touching his hat with one hand, while the other was raised to take the cards he expected to receive.

'Ask for—Miss Ridley,' she had almost said; but feeling that this would be *un peu trop fort*, she amended her speech, prefacing the name of the fair novelty who was the real object of her pursuit, by that of the lady of the mansion.

Greatly contrary to custom amidst morning visiters in general, Lady Dort was exceedingly pleased at being admitted. She had not employed so many years of her existence in seeking to render her mansion at-

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tractive to those who, being either born to greatness, or having achieved it, feel themselves privileged to wander only among the most flowery paths of human life; she had not so long directed all her attention to this one object, without having learned the value of a lovely face during the period which precedes its becoming as well known as those of the bright beauties who receive company in Trafalgar Square. It was therefore quite in the way of business that she was so steadfastly determined to run down Miss Ridley, and catch her without delay; for it so happened that '*Lady Dort's beautiful young friend,' par excellence*, had married at the end of the last season, and that her place was still vacant.

Now those who have the happiness of knowing Lady Dort well, know also that splendid as are the 'gatherings,' of which the fastidious Mrs. Gardener Stewart spoke so hardly, it is not to those alone that she trusts for her renown. Despite the immensity of quizzing which falls to her lot, in common with all who *will* place themselves on high, pre-eminent and apart, (whether in a pillory or a palace, whatever is conspicuous will be hit,) despite of this, there is probably no one who has ever dined with Lady Dort who will have the hardihood to deny that her dinner-table is 'a place of pleasure.' Excepting now and then an inconceivable cousin, from whom it is impossible to escape, her guests are almost always distinguished either for station, beauty, or talent; and as the dead stock found there is, upon the whole, very well deserving the honour of being sepulchred among the honourable clay which surrounds it, no one who has dined with her ladyship once but is exceedingly well pleased when an opportunity occurs for dining with her again. But success such as this can be obtained by no one who has not some talent for the business, and some industry to exert it. Beauties will marry—wits will often be pre-engaged; and great men, and great women too, will sometimes make themselves *unattachable*. Therefore is it that the gilded niche in society occupied by Lady Dort can be filled only by women who, like herself, are all energy, whose animal spirits are made of iron, which can neither rust by damp, nor break by a blow, and whose vanity acts with the force of a spring, for ever elastic, and ever in the most perfect repair.

Thus much is necessary to explain the manner of her ladyship's *entrée* into Mrs. Hartley's drawing-room.

The name of 'Lady Dort!' loudly and distinctly pronounced by the servant who threw open the door before her, caused considerable sensation there, and a family look passed round, in which there was a good deal of congratulation, and a little surprise.

Having made up her mind to endure a certain portion of Hartleyan mediocrity, Lady Dort wisely determined that the sacrifice of a little of her precious time, if made, should be made effectually, and therefore passed by Constance, though her experienced eye perceived with half a glance that she was looking splendidly beautiful in the elegant carriage costume prepared for the Park, and approaching Mrs. Hartley with extended hand, and a cordiality of mien nicely proportioned to the *rude* neglect which was intended to follow, she paid her compliments with an energy of civility that seemed almost affectionate.

Though Mrs. Hartley understood her ladyship's game indifferently well, and was but little if at all deceived by the flattering appearance of this unexpected greeting, she was herself too skilful a player to lose the possible advantages which might arise from it, and became as silvery smooth as a lake in sunshine, preparing herself to utter exactly as many agreeable things as her visiter would be so obliging as to listen to.

But these were not many. Having endured the waste of a minute and a half in listening to something about having 'seen her from Sir James Ridley's box at the Opera, looking so remarkably well,' during which, however, she found time to perform as much bowing as she deemed needful towards the Misses Hartley, Lady Dort rose from the seat assigned to her by Mrs. Hartley, and, in her usual energetic style of doing and saying, darted across the room to Constance, and seizing her hand, exclaimed, 'My sweet new friend! the eye not dimmed yet by the fatigue of meeting thousands of admiring glances! But how you will hate me for coming at such a moment! I see inscribed on every flower and on every plume the Park! the Park!' and she looked round upon the party, who were all, in fact, except Penelope, prepared for a drive.

'But how is this?' she cried, looking from one to the other, and counting them all upon her fingers; 'one, two, three, four! Four bonnets for one carriage! My dearest Mrs. Hartley, what an angelic being you must be! But it is absolutely impossible that any one possessing a carriage, and *not* possessing a heart composed of flint, marble, and adamant, can witness such a sacrifice of yourself for the gratification of others, without stepping forward to prevent it. Wherefore I, not being of a nature so detestable, do forthwith offer myself to aid and assist in putting a stop to proceedings which must end in a total discomfiture of patience and best bonnets. You shall come with me, my love,' she added, taking the arm of Constance, and placing it within her own; 'and perhaps, some other *beau jour*, Mrs. Hartley, if I bring you back to her safely, will entrust one of her own charming daughters to my care. *Chi sa?*'

Did not Lady Dort understand well what she was about? O yes! she did. That final stroke was masterly. Mrs. Hartley was very decidedly of those *qui ne donne rien pour rien;* and as she was vastly well inclined to show off Constance in the Park herself, there could not be a shadow of doubt that she would have found means to prevent Lady

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Dort's purpose taking effect, had not this sugar-plum of an invitation to one of her daughters been held out to her. It was, in fact, irresistible; her prophetic eye at once saw the possibility of hitching the circumstance into a paragraph for the *Morning Post*, and in an instant the arrangement was concluded by her saying, in her most light and lively manner, 'An immense improvement certainly, dear Lady Dort, to our order of march; and my lasses, I assure you, will live upon the hope of some day or other enjoying the same delightful privilege you are now going to bestow upon their friend Constance. But must your ladyship go directly?'

'O yes, instantly, dear lady!' replied the bluest of England's belles, and without further ceremony nodded a farewell to the rest of the party, hurried Constance out of the room, called for 'Lady Dort's carriage' with her own sublime lungs, and considerably before Mrs. Hartley and her daughters had recovered from the startling effect of her sudden entrance and more sudden exit, she was composedly rolling along with Constance by her side, complimenting herself both upon her dexterity and the value of the prize she had won.

'Obtain the *chariot* for a day,
And set the town on fire!'

she exclaimed, laughing. 'How very barbarous it would have been, my dearest Miss Ridley, to let you make your first appearance in the Park in that most detestable envelopment, a double close carriage, and surrounded too with a whole forest of feathers and flowers! Are you not very much obliged to me?'

For a country girl, Constance was not dull. She remembered that, despite all Penelope's croaking, she *might*, under the auspices of Lady Dort, be permitted to see the golden gates of Apollo's temple thrown open, and listen from the porch to the inspired voices within; so, without a moment's hesitation, she gracefully bent her very beautiful head, and replied, with much unction, 'I am indeed!'

'Charming!' cried Lady Dort. 'O, we shall be the very dearest of friends! I read it in the stars—that is, in your eyes, bellissima! And now tell me all about it—all about everything, I mean. Have you been long intimate with this family?'

'Do you mean Mrs. Hartley's family?' said Constance, smiling.

'Yes, my dear, I believe so. But why do you throw yourself so much into the corner? Do, pray, my love, look about you a little. It is a lovely day. Everybody that is not hideous is looking beautiful. But though I never fail to appear at the proper time and season, it is impossible to deny that a fine face is sadly thrown away here. I believe we are all apt to think a little of what we ourselves possess, and I do sometimes feel that it is rather provoking to be placed so exactly upon an equality with all the humpy-dumpy's. But in this misfortune we are equal, my dear Miss Ridley. You have a very fine form, really a very fine form—that is, considering you are so very young a person—just a *little* too much *en bon point*, perhaps, about the bust, but it is possible this may mend as you grow older. Mercy on me! look how that unruly beast rears! By the gracious moon I swear, Miss Ridley, that if that fine young man is killed, his untimely death must rest upon your head, for all these capers and curvetings—ces cabrioles et ces courbettes quasi salti e corvette—all and every of them are caused by you, and you alone! Saw you not how his eyes were fixed upon you as he thoughtlessly drew up his rein, and buried his spur in the foaming flank of his *destriero*? O ciel! what a plunge!'

During this series of exclamations, the plumed head of Lady Dort was protruded for the most part from the side-window, so that it was only at intervals, as she drew it back again to rehearse her agonies from time to time to her companion, that Constance received the alarming intelligence they conveyed. At length, however, her ladyship fell back, apparently exhausted both in mind and body by her exertions, and, drawing a long breath, exclaimed, 'There! now he is talking to Lady Elizabeth Peveril, so I suppose that for the moment he is safe; but for mercy's sake, my fair friend, have a care, should he again address himself towards our lurking-place, not so to ensconce yourself as to hazard the loss of life and limb to one so comely, by making it necessary that his steed should stand on tip-toe in order that he may get a sight of you.'

Constance laughed and said, 'The gentleman seems to be a skilful rider, Lady Dort; I do not think his life would be endangered, even if we were to half draw down the blinds.'

'Ah, c'est ça—Tu es moquese, ma belle?—J'en suis enchantée. It is such a relief, my dear love, to find a few delicate thorns among the roses that *nous autres* take so much delight in selecting from the nursery-beds, placing in a golden vase, and setting on high to be bowed to by all beholders! Henceforth let the peevish almanac say what it may, the day that brought you to me shall be a red letter day in my calendar. O, I am so thankful that you are satirical!'

'I shall be sorry to disappoint you, Lady Dort,' replied Constance, shaking her head and looking greatly ashamed of herself, 'but I do not believe that I am in the least degree satirical.'

'Bah! Laissez-moi faire, carissima! I intend to be immensely intimate with you; and therefore, if you will just sit easily and gracefully forward so as to be seen, but with your charming eyes fixed on me, instead of on that rabble rout of noble cavaliers, who would each one give a golden spur to catch a glance from them—if you

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will just do this, and listen to me, I will put you a little *au fait* as to myself, and then we shall start fair; for no character, whether male or female, however ingeniously enveloped in the tortuous drapery of disguise, can escape my piercing discernment—I was born with it, pretty one, and may not throw it aside, if I would. In telling you this, observe, I am only fulfilling my promise; I am only permitting you to know me as I know you; there will be no vain boasting in what I shall say of myself, for, in honest truth, I do believe that I am the most unegotistical soul alive! I do know, indeed, that there be things accounted graces in me, for the which I thank not the gods. But why seek to change what is inevitable in me, and that, too, when there is so fair reason to believe that my fellow-wanderers in this world of whim approve it? I allude, fair friend, to such peculiarities of thought or phrase as in some sort place me apart and separate me from the herd. All this was born with me, and I do but submit to the decree of Heaven when I seek not to change it.'

'I hope she is not absolutely mad,' thought Constance, looking at her with a glance that had, perhaps, something of fear in it.

'Charming creature!' exclaimed Lady Dort, in answer to this look. 'How well I read all that is passing in your mind! I think you feel disposed to love me, indeed I feel certain of it; but, at the same time, there is a pretty mixture of timidity in the sensations with which you contemplate a being so greatly unlike all you have known before! But fear nothing, carina. Use lessens marvel—you will get accustomed to me; and, besides, perfect love, you know, casteth out fear. I intend that you shall love me perfectly, and then all that is wild and wondrous in me will seem to your fertile eyes but as a charm *de plus*. Au reste, ma belle, it is but fair that I should tell you, sans façon et sans detour, that I am unique and alone in the power I possess of bringing you acquainted with all that is best worth knowing in London. What say you then—shall we swear an eternal friendship?'

That her new acquaintance was 'wild and wondrous,' Constance was quite as fully convinced as the lady herself could be; but she remembered with undiminished interest the personages by whom she had seen her surrounded, and felt that the last boast uttered was no vain one. Penelope was too much in love, she thought, to judge fairly as to what did and what did not constitute the chief charm of society; and with the same fresh feelings of eager longing to approach what was celebrated that she had brought to London with her, she replied, 'It is impossible, Lady Dort, to thank you enough for your kindness; your acquaintance must be equally an honour and a pleasure to me.'

'Bon! That little affair is settled then, and most entirely to my satisfaction, I assure you. Will you dine with me to-day, my dear? My Sunday dinners are never large, *ma scelti scelti*.'

For half an instant Constance doubted whether Mrs. Hartley might not be offended by her accepting this invitation without consulting her; but she recollected, in time to utter a very gracious and graceful affirmative, first, that her answer at the moment must be definitive; secondly, that she had reached the blessed age of independence; and, thirdly, that her hostess had most happily permitted her to take out the freedom of her mansion for the sum of three hundred pounds, the having paid which had already been a matter of considerable satisfaction on more occasions than one, but was now felt to be a greater comfort than ever.

'And now then, "chiefly that I may set it in my prayers," tell me your name,' said Lady Dort, adding, with an affectionate squeeze of the hand, 'I detest having for ever to call a lovely young friend *Miss* anything.'

'*Constance*,' replied the young lady, smiling; 'and fortunately I "break no best to say so."'

'O, what a comfort!' cried her ladyship, assuming with both eyes and hands an attitude of thanksgiving. 'You have no idea what a persecution it is when people stare as if they thought one mad, because they know not where one's words and phrases come from. But behold! here comes a knight worthy of a glance from those bright eyes, my Constance.'

As she spoke, a gentleman reined up his horse by the side of the carriage, and, resting his hand on the frame of the window which was let down on the side next Lady Dort, said, in a voice unknown to Constance, 'I hope I see Lady Dort and Miss Ridley well?'

On hearing her own name, Constance turned her eyes for a moment on the speaker, and bowed in reply to his salutation, and as she did so, a dim sort of recollection came across her that she had seen him before, but where or when she knew not. Yet neither the figure nor the features of the young man were such as are usually looked at only to be forgotten. Had Constance at that moment been fancy-free, she must perforce have confessed that he was not only the handsomest man she had ever seen, but beyond all comparison the most graceful, both in person and manner. But instead of making any such avowal to herself, her restive thoughts perversely turned to Henry Mortimer; for she remembered that it was while *he* had been still beside her that Lady Dort had presented this gentleman to her as Mr. something or other—she knew not what, for then, as now, she would have gladly banished him to the antipodes for ever, could she thereby have ensured the vicinity of Mortimer for five minutes.

As this thought occurred, her eyes naturally turned away from the young man with that absent look which eyes assume when

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the object upon which our thoughts are occupied is within; and then it was that the observant Lady Dort, perceiving that there was a shadow of chagrin on the fine features of the horseman, and thinking that she could put her new-formed friendship to no better purpose than that of propitiating the distinguished individual at her side, exclaimed, with her usual animated earnestness,

'Mr. Fitzosborne! Dine with me to-day. You shall not say me nay—positively you shall not. I can hardly call it a dinner-party, however, that I ask you to join; my friend, Miss Ridley, and half-a-dozen more perhaps, make up our host. You know the strict laws of attic dining—the number must neither be less than the graces, nor more than the muses. I never transgress this law on a Sunday; I think it is wrong not to pay some attention to the convenience of one's servants on that day. A little knot of friends may dine together without any great fuss; and as I never name an hour later than eight on Sunday, I flatter myself that, either before or after, all my people, or very nearly all, may be able to attend divine worship. C'est une affaire fixée, n'est pas? I may expect you at eight?'

Mr. Fitzosborne replied that he should have much pleasure in waiting upon her, and rode on.

'Eh bien, ma chère, what do you think of him? Mr. Fitzosborne is not only the handsomest man in London, but unquestionably the first *parti* as yet unappropriated. He has been three years abroad, and this is the first season since his return. What do you think of him?'

'Why, as I am not quite sure that I ever saw him before, Lady Dort, I hardly feel competent to pass judgment on him. He is certainly very handsome,' replied Constance.

'It needs no ghost to tell us that, my dear. Mr. Fitzosborne is perfect—O, perfect! with a palace of a place, a perfect Eden in Monmouthshire, and, à ce qu'on dit, twenty thousand a-year.'

But Lady Dort addressed herself to ears more deaf than those of any adder that ever crawled; for directly before the eyes of Constance was a low deep cab, slowly making its way through an intricate entanglement of horsemen, *au fond* of which cab her eye discovered the recumbent form of Henry Mortimer.

Though it would have been nearly impossible for him, consistently with his ideas of refinement, to have sat in such a carriage in any other attitude than that in which he now reposed, and which as nearly as possible prevented him from seeing any object either to the right or left, it was still evident to Constance that his eyes rolled anxiously in all directions, as if in search of some particular carriage that he was expecting to see.

'Is it possible that he is looking out for Mrs. Hartley?' was the question that she asked herself, and 'O, why does he not look this way?' was the thought that followed. In a moment after Lady Dort also descried him, and exclaimed,

'Here comes Mortimer! How bewitching he is with that beautiful wild stare! Isn't he, Constance? O, you must adore my Mortimer, or I shall decidedly leave off adoring you. Lord Dalton has got him to-day, you see. How the charming creature is devoured!'

By this time the impediments to the progress of Lord Dalton's carriage had withdrawn themselves, and in the next moment it was in the act of slowly passing that of Lady Dort. The eye of the poet at this moment recognized the face upon which his entranced thoughts were fixed, and, throwing himself forward, so as to suggest to all beholders the idea that he was about to precipitate himself to the ground, he seized upon Lord Dalton's reins, and suddenly jerking the horse back almost upon its haunches, stopped the carriage, and then balanced himself upon its step while he paid his compliments, in his usual sotto voce tone, to the two ladies.

'Oh! stop, John! stop!' shrieked Lady Dort. 'This is too perilous, Mr. Mortimer, indeed it is!' and all the line stopped too, in both directions. 'No more, no more, I implore you!—remember eight!' And as these last words were accompanied with half a glance and a quarter of a nod towards her companion, the happy poet recovered his seat, restored the reins to the hands of his noble but scolding friend, and permitted himself to be driven onward with unresisting patience, while his heart remained behind at the feet of the beautiful vision who had passed from before his eyes.

As to Constance, as unhappily she had seen neither the glance nor the nod which had conveyed such ecstasy to her adorer, her state was one of the most pitiable uncertainty as to her fate during the hours of that most happy or most wretched evening. Did eight o'clock mean eight o'clock of that day, or of some future one? Gnawing as were the doubt and fear which this uncertainty produced, she dared not attempt to relieve herself from it by asking the simple question, 'Does Mr. Mortimer dine with your ladyship to-day?'—no, not for worlds would she have attempted to pronounce it! So, pretending to listen to words which she did not hear, and to admire people whom she did not see, she continued to sit beside her new friend, exactly in the same condition as to pre-occupation in which Mr. Mortimer was sitting by his, each thinking wholly and solely of the other, with only this difference, that he was revelling in the assured delight of knowing that he was to meet her, while her spirit was wafted to and fro between hope and fear, her heart at one moment fluttering with the consciousness that probability was in her favour, and at another standing still as the fear of being disappointed returned.

'Time and the hour,' however, released them both from the restraint they were en-

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during, and it would be difficult to say which of them was the most rejoiced thereby.

CHAPTER XIV.

A SELECT DINNER-PARTY—A POET AND A POETESS, A PEER AND A PAINTER A-LA-MODE—AN ENGLISH GENTLEMAN AND AN ENGLISH YOUNG LADY, AND THEIR HOSTESS—GREAT RESULTS FROM LITTLE CAUSES.

The first object of Constance, on entering the house, was to seek Mrs. Hartley, for the purpose of communicating her engagement; but that lady was not yet returned; and as this disagreeable part of the business was of necessity postponed, she enjoyed the pleasure of half an hour's *tête-à-tête* with Penelope; while her spirits were still in that delightful state of agitation which makes the unreserved relation of the adventures which produced it a luxury.

'Already returned, dear Constance!' said Penelope, raising her eyes from an immeasurably long letter of Markham's, which he had himself contrived to deliver, and which, being very nearly the only one she had ever received, had been read and re-read about a dozen times without having yet lost the zest of novelty.

'Already!' repeated Constance. 'I thought I had been gone an immense time.'

'I might suspect, from your saying so, that the interval since we parted has been more tedious than long,' said Miss Hartley, 'but that your smiling aspect and sparkling eyes forbid me to think so.'

'My aspect and my eyes would be horribly false,' returned Constance, laughing, 'did they tell you that I had found the drive tedious, excepting just the last bit of it, perhaps, when I longed to get home and tell you how delighted I had been.'

'Then you have been greatly charmed by your companion, I presume. I know very little personally of Lady Dort beyond her appearance, and that is not captivating; but I suppose she is very entertaining?'

'Exceedingly entertaining,' said Constance, as gravely as she could, and concealing the lower part of her face, forgetting how heartily her eyes were laughing the while.

'You saucy rustic!' cried Penelope. 'Your amusement, I suspect, has been furnished by her ladyship's absurdities.'

'O, tempt me not!' replied Constance; 'I do assure you she is the most obliging person I ever met in my life, and knows not only how to will, but to do, the most agreeable things in the world. I must and will feel grateful to her; so I entreat you, dearest Penelope, not to seduce me into the baseness of laughing at her. I dare say we are all of us ridiculous in our different ways, only you know we never take notice of what we are used to.'

'Thank you a thousand times, my dear old friend, for my share of that generous effusion. But now let us descend to particulars. What has Lady Dort done to bewitch you into a fit of such self-denying philosophy? Has she invited you to meet Mr. Mortimer at dinner?'

'Avaunt, witch!' cried Constance, turning from her; 'I will have no more dealings with you.'

'Then it positively is so. Upon my word, Miss Ridley, you are getting on at a prodigiously rapid rate. There must be some high pressure power at work, that is certain. Pray, my dear, do you imagine that the petted Mortimer made this a condition for yielding himself to her ladyship's invitation?'

'Good heaven! No. *Vous n'y êtes pas*, Penelope. I do not even know for certain that Mr. Mortimer is to be there to-day.'

'To-day! Are you going to dine with Lady Dort to-day!' exclaimed Miss Hartley with very genuine surprise. 'Why, Constance, this is the very crowning top and finish of intimacy. "Dine with me to-day, my friend!" uttered all *improviso*, in London, is the *ne plus ultra* of affectionate familiarity.'

'Then ought I not to be grateful?' demanded Constance, looking as grave as she could. 'Such were, to all intents and purposes, the words addressed to me by this delightful Lady Dort to-day, and my joy and gratitude are equal, both being past expression great. But what will your mother say to it, Penelope? I am terrified at the idea of her making me a speech, beginning "My dear Miss Ridley, I am really afraid,"—and so on, up, or rather down, to the heart-breaking assurance that I had better not go.'

'You have nothing of the kind to fear, I am certain,' replied Miss Hartley; 'I am sure my mother will be pleased by your making so desirable an acquaintance—unless, indeed,' she added, colouring, 'there should be any difficulty about the carriage.'

'That rock, thank Heaven, is not in the way, Penelope. Lady Dort offered to send her carriage for me, and as I know your mother is going out, I accepted it. Now, tell me, do not you think that if my new friend were actually a skeleton, and embroidered her English with Dutch instead of Italian, that I ought to dote upon her?'

'She certainly appears to be doing everything she can to win your heart. But here comes mamma. Had you not better run up stairs at once, and begin dressing? See—it is past seven. I will undertake to announce your engagement.'

Penelope held open the drawing-room door as she spoke, and Constance, feeling more grateful for the offer than she thought it proper to express, passed hastily through it, only saying, 'Come to me while I am dressing,' and ran up the stairs with a light step and a light heart, just in time to escape the cross-examination which she would have had to undergo, had she lingered a moment longer.

As Constance never made a very long

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business of dressing, she indulged herself, before she rang for her maid, in a few moments of very delightful solitary meditation upon the new delights that seemed opening before her. Could she, amidst the most highly-wrought hopes and wishes in which she had sometimes indulged when wandering alone in the shady recesses of Appleby, have ever painted to herself anything one half so delightful as a very small select dinner-party at Lady Dort's? And then, too, she knew not that the world contained—she guessed not that the world *could* contain, a being so every way enchanting as Mortimer. O, she was too, too happy! Yes, he would be there, she felt sure he would be there. Eight o'clock must mean eight o'clock to-day; and then, could she forget the eager action with which he had stopped Lord Dalton's carriage? Did she not know, did she not feel in her heart of hearts, that it was for her?

When Penelope entered, she found her still alone, and enjoying a reverie which would have been cheaply purchased by the sacrifice of many a day of ordinary existence.

'What! no dressing begun yet?' said her friend. 'Constance! Constance! this looks very suspicious indeed. I could forgive you, perhaps, if "with him conversing you forget all time;" but the merely thinking of him is hardly an excuse, is it, for keeping Lady Dort's carriage and dinner both waiting for you?'

'I shall keep nobody waiting, Penelope,' replied the happy girl, gaily throwing aside her paille de riz bonnet in one direction, and her embroidered mantelet in another; 'nobody ever waits for me, you know. But, tell me,' she continued, as she proceeded to prepare herself for the business of the toilet—'tell me, what said mamma to this proposed escapade? Does she seem to think it wrong that I should go?'

'Wrong! O no, certainly not. She only says you are a very lucky girl to have got on so rapidly.'

'Lucky!' repeated Constance; 'I have no words to express what I think of my own good fortune; and I am so glad she did not blame me. I know I am very wilful, but yet I do not like to displease anybody if I can help it. How glad I am, my dearest Penelope, that you are in love!'

'And, pray, why so?' demanded Miss Hartley, laughing. 'That I may keep you in countenance, I suppose.'

'No, indeed. As I could not love anybody till somebody loves me, I should be vastly too proud of the thing, if ever it *did* happen, to want any one to give me countenance. No, no; the reason I rejoice in your love, is because I know that it occupies you too entirely to leave you any time to wish for me. Were it otherwise, I should not like to leave you, dear Penelope.'

'Yet, were it otherwise, I should rejoice too sincerely at seeing you occupied so exactly as I know you wished to be, to have any room left in my heart for selfish regrets. But positively I must ring for Susan. I will not be aiding and abetting to a careless and hurried toilet on such an occasion as this.'

But Constance was neither ill-dressed nor waited for, and moreover found time, before Lady Dort's carriage was announced, to show herself in the drawing-room, and receive the first burst of unmitigated curiosity, and half-approving, half-reproaching wonder from her brother, who, as usual, was stationed there preparatory to the dinner which he almost daily condescended to eat at Mrs. Hartley's. She answered all his questions and all his remarks with such an air of smiling good-humoured indifference, that he could hitch neither reproofs nor reproaches upon her proceeding, and she set off to keep her somewhat envied and completely unexpected engagement, with spirits as bright as her own lustrous eyes.

She found Lady Dort alone in the smallest of her two handsome drawing rooms, surrounded with books, busts, cameos, fossils, and learned litter of all sorts; but all disarranged with excellent judgment, all provocative of remark and conversation, and only making part of an immense collection, which being brought to view by very skilfully-managed instalments, and in combinations as various as those of the gamut, promised to furnish themes eternally new, even to those who encountered them the most frequently.

'*Ben venuta, bellissima!*' said her ladyship, rising to meet her, and then standing still to await her approach, as if transfixed by admiration. 'Miss Ridley, I delight in you. You are positively formed expressly to be the load-star of such a fastidious little party as I expect to-day. My charming Constance, how can I thank you enough for such sweet pliancy! Had you refused me this day, I never could—no, nor I never would—have summoned courage to entreat again. But now, my love, before my pets arrive, I must sketch for your use a little *carte du pays*. Know, then, that I expect Lady Georgina Grayton, and four men. *Voilà tout.* Her ladyship is a prodigious verse-writer, wonderful! and, on the whole, much less of a bore than one might expect. Besides, she is exceedingly graceful, though decidedly a little too large. But there is no use in quarrelling with people on that account. Everybody one sees is too large! I really believe that a bust and torso, of classic form, and sufficiently *svelte* for perfect beauty, is the rarest gift of Heaven. But to return to Lady Georgina; the surest way to win her heart—I do not mean in an amatory sense—her loves, I believe, are chiefly confined to her verses—but as a friend, a partisan, a *devouée*, is by alluding to her *latinity*. Remember this, my dear, if for any reason you wish to get on with her. And now then for my men! First in place is my Lord Willoughby. His novels show what he could do, if he chose to address himself in earnest to the achieving a first-rate literary reputation! O, he is a most extraordinary man! Such wit, such fascination—and then his letters! But after all, sweet Constance, I do but waste my praise, for he

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has arrived at too shady a part of human existence to have any rational hope of enjoying the sunshine of your smiles. Next in station, and far before him, both in fortune and antiquity of race, is Frederic Fitzosborne, the graceful cavalier you saw to-day—the admired of all beholders; and then the poet, the delicious poet, Mortimer. It always seems to me, my dear Miss Ridley, that this charming man must be the natural son of Apollo. Were he legitimately descended from the godhead, he would probably appear on earth with more of those vulgar gifts that are held so precious here. But our Mortimer is neither rich nor noble, excepting in those gifts of soul which lead us to look amidst the aristocracy of heaven for his progenitors. Yet mistake me not; he is not of the mob, even in this, having an independence sufficient for all his wants, and a privileged entrée into every house of fashion which pleases him, to say the least of it, is on an equality with the highest. My fourth darling is Bradley—Bradley the inspired! Who has not heard of Bradley? If Mortimer, my Constance, be the natural son of Apollo, Bradley stands in the same near relation to Apelles. O! he is dear to me as is the light of heaven. Nay, charming Constance, look not so dismayed. I would not speak in strains so rapturous, even to you, did not all the ladies in the land deem themselves warranted to do the like. He has a patent privilege, Miss Ridley, for falling in love with every face he paints, and every face he paints smiles on him in return with safe impunity; for what all do, none need fear to do. Such is the social moral of our code, and such the law we own.'

Of all this, which both in manner and matter was intended by Lady Dort as a sort of initiatory sample of herself and her friends, displayed for the use of the young novice—of all this, Constance neither heeded nor heard anything, save the words which related to Mortimer. The instant his name was mentioned, every sense seemed merged and absorbed in that of hearing, and not a syllable that concerned him was pronounced which did not rest engraven on her heart. Whether it were that the assurance now received that she should indeed meet him, had put her into a state of spirits which disposed her to be pleased with everything, or whether the account thus given of him really was exactly what she wished to hear, may be doubtful; but it is certain that as Lady Dort's eloquence rolled on, the mind of Constance remained fixed with the most entire satisfaction on what she had now learned concerning him. Not rich—then if he asked her love, he would receive with the avowal of it the dear conviction that it was disinterested. Having an independence—then none could reproach her with imprudence, for in this were they not precisely equal?

Lady Dort was in the act of rounding off another period expressive of her rapturous devotion to the son of Apelles, when the gentleman so designated was announced.

That the eyes of Constance, all meditative as she was, should turn towards the door when it opened, was quite natural; for how could she be sure that the only object in the whole wide world that she desired to behold might not enter ere it closed again? But it would have been equally so, perhaps, that, not seeing him, they should have turned away again, had any figure less surprising than that of Mr. Bradley appeared at it.

As she looked at him, an indistinct but yet positive recollection of the high-sounding epithets of admiration bestowed upon him by Lady Dort recurred to her, and she contemplated his diminutive figure with considerable surprise. Had it not been for a sort of faded look that fatally contradicted the supposition, Mr. Bradley might have been taken for a lad of sixteen; and, but for that same faded look, he would have been a pretty lad too; for there was, at the first glance, a marvellously sweet harmony in his features, the charm of which only wore off when the look of unrest, that sundry stormy feelings had left upon them, became perceptible, and then, to the impartial and uninterested observer, there was something vexatiously and disagreeably incongruous in his aspect and his demeanour—in his features, and the expression of them.

Nevertheless it was difficult not to notice him—difficult even not to watch and follow him with a degree of attention so disproportioned to the value of the result, as to be a perfect stumbling-block to the speculative lookers-on upon society. Constance, like the rest of the world, continued to remark him, even after the more dignified personages, Lady Georgina Grayton and Lord Willoughby, had made their appearance; and, like the rest of the world, had she been asked the reason for it, she would have found it exceedingly difficult to give a reasonable answer. Her first tangible observation perhaps was upon his extraordinary familiarity of address. At his entrance he had rather bounded than walked into the room, having something (apparently facetious) to say to the functionary who announced him, which caused him to turn his back for a moment upon her expectant ladyship, which want of observance was to be atoned for by the celerity of the movement with which he afterwards approached her. His salutation then consisted of dropping upon one knee, and kissing the finger tips of her gloves, after which he 'recovered feet' with a movement as startling in its suddenness as that with which the soldier 'recovers arms' on parade. He then placed himself midway between Lady Dort and Constance, standing with his heels together, one hand within his embroidered waistcoat of white and gold, and the other still holding his hat, looking, in very speaking pantomime, his wish to be presented to the young lady, and his perfect readiness to make her a bow.

'Bradley! Bradley all over!' cried her ladyship laughing. 'Miss Ridley, permit me to introduce my friend Mr. Bradley to you. The Bradley, Miss Ridley, no less.

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When you have had the pleasure of his acquaintance a little longer, you will know that his will is law.'

Constance returned his bow rather slightly, for there was something within her that seemed rising to resist this sort of usurping despotism; but it mattered not; Mr. Bradley placing himself on the rug, with his back towards the *soupçon* of fire which still retained its place in the grate, addressed her with the most encouraging amiability of manner,

'I am quite sure I saw you at the Opera last night, Miss Ridley. That beautiful creature Penelope Hartley was with you. But tell her from me, will you, that she must positively never wear that cold-looking lavender silk again. Married or single, she must wear black velvet till the sun is in Cancer. Be so kind as to tell her this, will you?'

'Certainly,' replied Constance, smiling.

'Do you know the Hartleys, Bradley?' said Lady Dort, yawning.

'Never spoke to either of them in my life,' he replied. 'But that eldest girl is beautiful. I took a sketch of her profile on my thumb-nail, one night last winter, and I have had it in half-a-dozen groups since.'

'But she is too round, Bradley,' groaned forth Lady Dort. 'How can you talk of sketching a woman with such a bust as that?'

The grimace with which this remonstrance was received was too much for the gravity of Constance, and she would have been sadly embarrassed how to conceal the irrepressible smile it produced, had not her handkerchief been in her hand. Had she wished for a practical illustration of the degree in which this remarkable gentleman was permitted to transgress all the ordinary restraints of society, the present occasion might have sufficed to content her.

'O you wretch! you mean to insinuate that I am too slight—too fragile—I know you do. Monster!'

Mr. Bradley burst into an immoderate fit of laughter.

'Do I think you too slight, too fragile?' he exclaimed. 'Heaven and earth! do I? Why, my beloved lady, your unequalled form is fitted only for the shades below—Elysium shades I mean, of course. But here, here on this solid earth—O! you are a dream, Lady Dort—you are, upon my soul.'

'Is he not matchless, dearest?' said Lady Dort, turning to Constance with a look of ecstacy. 'Say not that I have called you into my charmed circle for nothing. It is not everywhere, nor always, that this bright vagary of creation, this frolic of nature, this master-piece of delicious impertinence, shows to the advantage he does here. The creature is both inspired and licensed with me. Is it not so, you petted idol?'

'If it were not, I should hang myself,' replied the elderly boy, with a flourish of melodramatic energy. 'Behold the Willoughby!' he added, as the door again opened, and the elegant looking nobleman he named appeared at it.

The address of Lord Willoughby was in the best possible style of high breeding; and for a minute or two even Lady Dort appeared less fantastic than usual, as she replied to what he said to her. Having done so, she waited not for any beseeching looks, as in the case of Mr. Bradley, but in sober form and phrase introduced Miss Ridley and his lordship to each other.

'In so very small a circle,' she said, in a half whisper to Constance, 'it is absolutely barbarous not to make every lady know everybody.'

'Now look at yourself, milud,' said the painter, stepping from before the chimney-glass, that no obstacle might impede the examination he commanded; though, sooth to speak, Lord Willoughby might have beheld, without the least inconvenience, a considerable portion of his own person over the head of Mr. Bradley. 'Now look at yourself, milud, and tell me if you are not absolutely ashamed of having permitted your valet to leave that lock of hair so precisely where I told you, when you sat to me, that it never must be?'

'Forgive me, mighty master!' replied Lord Willoughby with great good humour; 'but I actually walked forth from my dressing-room without having given a single glance at the mirror. In the first place, I have unbounded confidence in my Scapin, and in the second, I knew not that I should enjoy the perilous pleasure of meeting you.'

'Perilous!' reiterated the delicately formed Bradley, clenching his small fist, and standing on tiptoe to bring it within an inch or two of Lord Willoughby's nose. 'Perilous! but for this fair presence it well might prove so. I scorn to display my athletic skill before ladies. So rest in peace, milud. But never more be hair-dresser of mine!'

Ere this sally was well uttered, Lady Georgina Grayton entered the room, and, with the exception of the unknown Constance, every one in it stepped simultaneously forward to welcome her. She was a pale, delicate, pretty looking woman of about five-and-thirty, and though plethoric in comparison to Lady Dort, was little likely to be considered as too fat by any one but her ladyship. The two ladies saluted each other on both cheeks; Lord Willoughby accosted her with very friendly intimacy, but elicited a profound sigh from her fair bosom by inquiring for Mr. Grayton, while Mr. Bradley presented his arm to assist her progress to the chair in which he wished to place her, though the distance to it did not exceed three paces. This did not, however, prevent her rewarding his attention by a very grateful look, which lost none of its gentleness when, having assisted her to sink into the depths of a luxurious bergère, he seated himself on a footstool at her feet.

There was something so very new to Constance in this free and easy display of familiar intimacy, that she felt more embarrassed and more ill at ease than she had done since her change from the country to the town. Her own chair, too, was so placed as to give the petted painter a better

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opportunity for a professional study of her features than was at all agreeable to her, and by a movement that had more of impulse than reflection in it, she pushed her chair back so as to place herself at a considerably greater distance from the group.

Now it did sometimes happen to this strangely privileged individual, that persons not to his manner born, would occasionally show indications of thinking that the tricks in which he indulged himself, and in which he was so unaccountably indulged, would be more honoured in the breach than the observance. But this never happened without inciting him to caricature, as it were, his own impertinence, in order to show any such starched and stately questioners of his acknowledged franchise, that he was not to be checked or controlled by any in the exercise of it. It was probably in pursuance of this system that he now, giving a very saucy side-glance towards Constance, proceeded very audaciously to draw off the glove of Lady Georgina, in order to examine her rings, which operation he had previously commenced by a most unceremonious manipulation through her glove. To all this the lady submitted with extraordinary resignation, conversing meantime with Lady Dort and Lord Willoughby, as if no such person as Mr. Bradley existed, as if her footstool were unencumbered, and her fingers permitted to remain in peaceful possession of her rings.

'Forbear to judge!' is an admirable injunction, and may be applied to great advantage on occasions less solemn than that whereon it stands recorded. Had it been whispered, for example, in the ear of Constance at the present moment, she might have paused ere in her heart she decided that Lady Georgina Grayton was a woman of manners so lightly indiscreet, as to argue very unfavourably of her character. Now in point of fact there was no lady in London of character more perfectly irreproachable. Not even her incessant, and not very wise lamentations, on the uncongenial nature of her husband's disposition and pursuits, could put it into the head of any one to doubt the correctness of her conduct; and her unresisting submission to the little painter's impertinence was only a proof of her being too much *au fait* of one of the fashionable whims of the day and the set in which she lived, for her to find anything extraordinary or objectionable in it. Rumour, indeed, who dearly loves to pick up a bit of scandal as she goes, had not suffered all the fine ladies who thus amused themselves to escape so well—but this is in nowise germane to the matter.

Mr. Fitzosborne was the next person who appeared. When manners are faultless, there is little to be said of them; and this, doubtless, is the reason why nine hundred and ninety-nine thousand nine hundred and ninety-nine volumes out of every million, written to illustrate the phenomena of social life, are devoted to setting forth the folly instead of the wisdom of mankind. Moreover, such men as Mr. Fitzosborne do not wear their characters outside. If accident or choice places them during some portion of their existence within the vortex of fashionable life, they rarely exhibit any Quixotic struggles to separate the chaff from the corn, or labour to prove, by any outward symbols, that though in the herd, they are not of them. It required something beyond either a drawing or a dining room acquaintance with Frederic Fitzosborne, in order to form a correct estimate of what he was.

Eccentric as genius is ever declared to be, there was one point on which Henry Mortimer was as stedfast and unvarying as the sun. No one living, probably, had ever met him at a dinner-party whereat he was not the last guest who arrived. How he managed it, was perfectly unaccountable; for although the punctuality of his tardiness was unvaried, it was so nicely managed as never greatly to irritate the cook; in fact, no man less liked to see a turbot in fragments than the poetic Mortimer.

'He comes! he comes!' exclaimed Lady Dort. 'Save me, and hover o'er me with your wings, you heavenly guards! What would your gracious figure? You cannot come to dine? Why, Mortimer, it is not yet three minutes by the finger of my alabaster Time yonder, since Mr. Fitzosborne entered; and who does not know that Mortimer ever requires five to elapse ere his foot follows that of the penultimate guest?'

'Shall I go away again?' said the young man, his countenance brightly lighted up by the sight of the perhaps only half-expected Constance.

'Nay, nay, my friend! "Come I too late?" is a pregnant phrase that might sometimes suit you well—but come I too early? never!'

On the entrance of Fitzosborne, Bradley had very quickly risen from his footstool, and claimed his acquaintance by a sober bow, which was returned exactly in the same manner; whereupon the artist knit his brows, and felt through every fibre of his animated frame that the man who could so bow to him was unblessed by a single ray of genius—a being wholly formed of clay, without a particle of that redeeming quicksilver which was the better part of man, and then he for a moment set himself seriously to study how he should escape, in case the proud young commoner applied to him for his portrait.

But when Mortimer entered, his air and manner suddenly changed again into a sort of exaggerated animation, which, when compared to that of other people, seemed like vivacity seen through a magnifying glass. He crossed his arms upon his breast, and performed a succession of salaams that nearly brought his handsome forehead to the ground, and then, in defiance of the greetings passing between the poet and his friends, he placed his arm upon his shoulder, and absolutely insisted upon whispering a few words in his ear, before he suffered him either to hear or reply to any one else.

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As it was ever the custom at Lady Dort's to announce dinner as soon as possible after the arrival of Mr. Mortimer, but little time was given to the enamoured young man to profit by the unspeakable happiness of finding himself near Constance; but that little he used without ceremony, placing himself beside her with an air of authorized appropriation; and when the expected sound of 'dinner' was heard, waiting for no permission but his own to present his arm, in order to conduct her down stairs.

'Can you forgive me, Bradley,' said Lady Dort, as she herself took the arm of Lord Willoughby, 'for not having invited your last elected little Hebe to attend upon you?' This was answered by a shrug. Mr. Fitzosborne presented his arm to Lady Georgina, and the party descended to the dining-room.

Those only who watch the varying signs of the social and moral world, as a shepherd does the clouds, their lights, their shades, their colourings, and their distances, will learn, like him, to understand the atmosphere in which they live. Without such study, the surface of society is an almost monotonous hemisphere, having indeed its horizon and its zenith, but with little intermediate *relief* to attract the eye, or occupy the understanding. But when it is studied with attention, the result is very different; and even things intended to be the same differ almost as widely as the skull of a German from that of a Frenchman. To follow such study, to explain the points it ought to fix upon, and the seemingly slight indications which lead to important results, would fill a volume instead of a page—not to mention that such a volume, however ingenious, would be utterly useless; inasmuch as the power of observing is very nearly as much an intuitive faculty as that of invention, and neither will nor can be taught, despite all the modern manuals so assiduously offered for the purpose. Those who do observe, may indeed often find very intelligent listeners among those who do not; and it not unfrequently happens that the dreamy eye that passes from scene to scene, with little consciousness how widely different are the phenomena to be found in each, kindles into higher and deeper speculation, when pregnant themes are pointed out to it, than the mere observer ever fell into.

The excellent dinners of Lady Dort, notwithstanding the identity of many of its elements, (even among the guests themselves,) were no more like the excellent dinners of Mrs. Gardener Stewart, than the scudding before a fluttering gale is to floating down the current of a tranquil stream.

Lady Dort would have felt her renown blighted and withered almost past recovery, had she suffered any one subject to drop without taking care that another sprang out of it, like the beguiling continuity of the Arabian nights. Tradespeople would have been changed, and servants dismissed, had she seen reason to suspect that anything was defective in the *positif* of her entertainments; but, comparatively speaking, this would have appeared to her as a matter of utter indifference, if placed before her in competition with any defect in the feast of reason and the flow of soul with which it was the principal object of her life to regale her guests.

Mrs. Gardener Stewart, on the contrary, having, as a matter of course, taken care that her guests were all very delightful people, neither old nor ugly, with well-tuned voices and irreproachable *bon ton*, permitted the flow of soul to go on pretty much as chance directed; but never suffering a shade from her *pococurante* system to fall upon the perfection of her banquet, or the studied refinement of its accompaniments. With a mind of much smaller proportions than that of Lady Dort, there was less of absurdity, as well as less of cleverness; and if she often suffered wit to repose itself behind a quiet smile, instead of insisting that it should be for ever in active exercise, she at least took care that it should find nothing to carry away with it to furnish sport for its more active moods. All she asked of Heaven for herself was an eternal *entourage* of everything that was soothing to the senses, and all her elegant ambition sought was to obtain a sensitive circle of adoring friends, worthy to share with her in the enjoyment of it. She wished not to inspire any feelings warmer or stronger than what were likely to arise from being the source from whence such gentle hours flowed, and would rather have closed her eyes in endless night, than have been quoted as one of those who expected that the luxuries of her mansion should be repaid by the conversational efforts of her guests. Such men as the sentimental Mortimer preferred Mrs. Gardener Stewart; such as the animated Lord Willoughby most affected Lady Dort. Fitzosborne, though he greatly admired neither, permitted himself for a season to find amusement from both; while Mr. Bradley, and everything in the slightest degree resembling him, whether belonging to art or to science, and though deriving fame from all the reputation that either could bestow, was so completely an abomination to Mrs. Gardener Stewart, that her name was never heard from any such, while that of Lady Dort was very affectionately familiar to them all.

This *episode parallel* has been resorted to as the shortest way of bringing the reader acquainted with the rival patronesses of Constance, and may save time hereafter.

Of this, her first London dinner-party, Miss Ridley was, in truth, no very fair judge; Mortimer was seated at her right hand, and, when doing her very best to describe the party on the following day to Penelope, she was perfectly unable to tell who it was that was seated at her left. The conversation was exceedingly lively;—Lady Dort was whimsical, and superabundantly animated; Lady Georgina was prettily plaintive, and most amusingly learned; Lord Willoughby abounding in witty anecdote; Mr. Fitzosborne aiding and abetting

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the display of each by a few well-timed words, which might have proved, to any one at leisure to think about it, that he rather sought to hear others than to be heard himself; while the inspired artist, whenever he could find leisure from his assiduous combinations of half-a-dozen sauces into one, to contribute the proportion expected from him towards the amusement of the hour, did it by such wild and whimsical bursts of mingled folly and cleverness, that Lady Dort declared him, at least half-a-dozen times before the dinner was ended, to be, without exception, the most enchanting animal and the most delightful wretch that nature ever produced.

And Mortimer—the sought-for and admired Mortimer—what did he do to redeem the pledge which every one thought that they received when told they were about to meet him? O, he did much. True it is that no syllable he uttered was heard by any other ear than that of Constance. But Mr. Mortimer was of so much importance, that everything he did was of importance too. His love-affairs, in particular, were always public property, and he never fell out of one, and into another, without furnishing a world of discussion of the most deep and delightful interest to all the pretty single women in town—and happy was the man who had the first tale to tell, and the first anecdote to give, of such events.

No one felt disappointed, therefore, when, instead of the acute remark, the delicate irony, and the gentle vivacity of Henry Mortimer, they perceived only the beau idéal of a poet dissolving in love. Nothing really having existence can be so light, so slight, so untangible, so like a volatile essence that fades before it is fully exhaled, as the signs of *sous-intelligence* exchanged between well-bred persons *à l'insu* of their object; yet, nevertheless, looks were given, received, and understood on the present occasion, which put Lord Willoughby perfectly *au fait* of Lady Georgina's suspicions, and Lady Dort's convictions, respecting the poet's unborn love, and Mr. Fitzosborne respecting Mr. Bradley's unmitigated impertinence.

It was not the custom at Lady Dort's for the gentlemen to remain long in the dining-room after the ladies had left it; and, as little as her accomplished ladyship suspected it, there were elements in the *partie carrée* she left behind her there on the present occasion sufficiently discordant to render this usually short period shorter still. Nevertheless, Mr. Mortimer, who was the first to make his way back to the drawing-room, did not arrive there before Lady Dort had full time to cross-examine Constance a little respecting her previous acquaintance with him. During the whole time this lasted, Lady Georgina Grayton kept her handsome eyes immovably and very unceremoniously fixed upon the party under examination, making various active preparations the while for her own permanent accommodation on the sofa—such as arranging the cushions, approaching a footstool, and placing a screen, but yet never for an instant withdrawing her eyes, or relaxing her scrutiny.

It is no very easy matter for a conscious and enamoured girl to endure all this gracefully, and without so losing her self-possession as to betray exactly the species of interesting agitation expected. But there was a sturdiness of self-respect about Constance which, despite the tumultuous throbbing of her heart, enabled her to reply quietly, distinctly, and correctly to Lady Dort, while she sustained the steady eyebrow of Lady Georgina with an admirable appearance of unconsciousness.

This effort was simply the effect of a sort of innate maiden dignity, resisting, almost by instinct, the attempt to dive into the hidden treasures that her heart concealed, and had no reference whatever to the impression which her words or manner might make on either of their curious ladyships; but had Constance studied her companions with all the sagacity of a Machiavelli, she could have pursued no line of conduct so likely to bring them to her feet. Lady Dort felt persuaded that she had caught a '*personage*,' a '*character*,' a thing to wonder at, as well as to admire—a creature, in short, who could stand the admiration of Henry Mortimer, without having her head turned or her heart excoriated by it; while Lady Georgina at once saw in her a heroine to whom she could indite sonnets and elegies—in whose honour she could paraphrase Horace, quote Ovid, and invoke Janus, and for whom she could immediately form one of those devoted friendships which led to picturesque groupings, piquant whisperings, and the power of opening her entire heart on the subject of her still dear but most uncongenial Grayton!

Urged by feelings so powerful, the polished and delicately-transparent barrier of drawing-room incognito was thrown aside, and Lady Georgina, begging 'to be named' to Miss Ridley, declared herself exceedingly desirous of making her acquaintance.

It was immediately after this ceremony had been performed that the poet entered, upon which Lady Georgina, who had actually abandoned all the comforts of cushions, footstool, and screen, for the purpose of placing herself near the friend to whom she was determined to devote herself for the next two months, rose from the chair she had just taken, and, looking from it to the face of Mortimer, and from the face of Mortimer to it, with an expression equally elegant and intelligible, returned to her former position, conscious that she bore with her the gratitude of two devoted hearts.

This was a species of *offrande* by no means new to Mr. Mortimer. Neither his devoted attachments nor his desolating disappointments were ever kept secret from that elegant portion of society to which he belonged, and there was scarcely a pretty married woman, who made one of it, who

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did not eagerly seize upon every occasion of showing her gentle sympathy; so he dropped into the vacant chair with one rapid glance of acknowledgment to the charming friend who had resigned it, and prepared to give himself up again, wholly and solely, to the gentle converse of his new divinity.

But although this avowed preparation for love-making was not new to him, it was to Miss Ridley, and not all her inclination to listen to him for ever could make it agreeable to her. 'As soon,' thought she, 'would I perform the balcony scene in Romeo and Juliet with him, before a select and judicious audience, as endure this! Oh! what would he think of me if I could!' Nevertheless, it required some little consideration in order to decide upon the best and fittest mode of avoiding it. She could not fly from his side at the very moment he was speaking to her, and that with no ostensible object whatever for the movement; such marked avoidance would be as *scenic* and as objectionable as remaining. No! she must 'bide the time,' and watch for an opportunity.

It was not, however, very easy to find it; for when it was Mr. Mortimer's will to talk, his words flowed on with the delicious harmony of a gentle rippling stream, as sweet, and as incessant too.

Lady Dort had placed herself beside Lady Georgina, and their two heads, whisperingly close together, showed no hope of her being able civilly to introduce her own between them, and, ere she had achieved the movement she meditated, the door again opened, and the other three gentlemen entered together.

By a habit too inveterate for the most genial spring weather to alter as long as an atom of fire is permitted to glimmer on an English hearth, they all walked up to the hearth-rug, and awaited there the arrival of the steaming vase, whose fragrant exhalations had already greeted them as they ascended the stairs.

While thus standing, the group formed by Miss Ridley, Mr. Mortimer, and the young lady's nosegay, was precisely in front of them all, and certainly was not overlooked by either. The six eyes thus fixed upon her were more than Constance could bear, and, suddenly rising, as if to set her own coffee-cup upon the table, she remained stationary beside it long enough to select from its multitudinous treasures a volume which seemed to promise wherewithal to give her the comfort of an occupation better suited to the place and time than listening to Mr. Mortimer's interpretation of the flowers of which her boquet was composed.

Constance had asked herself what Mortimer would think of her should she continue to sit beside him, as if expressly to receive his homage before the eyes of all beholders. Had she made this inquiry of one capable of giving her a true answer, she would have been told, that in no way could she have more effectually riveted the poet's chains, than by making him feel that when he was near her she was unconscious of all else the world contained; for nothing could be much less similar than this gentleman's estimate of young ladies during the period when his loves were crescent, and that which followed when they were waning.

But had the same question been asked and answered concerning the judgment of Mr. Fitzosborne on the same subject, she would have learned that nothing could be in nicer harmony than his opinions and her own. Never, either in his native land or out of it, had Fitzosborne seen a woman whom he thought comparable in attractive loveliness to Constance Ridley; and though it was already very acutely painful to him to witness the unreserved devotion of the ever-privileged Mortimer to her, his incipient, and, as yet, almost unconscious attachment, was in no degree shaken thereby; for he felt it natural that every man of taste should admire her; nor could he feel at all surprised that the chartered laureat of beauty, the acknowledged adorer of the fairest faces which each successive season produced, should not suffer hers to pass without its meed of worship.

He saw, too, that the fair divinity was neither unconscious of, nor averse to, the offering; and that this, too, gave him pain, was very certain. Nevertheless, he had a deep conviction at his heart, that no pain from this source could be permanent. His tranquil but deeply-observing eye had gone too far beyond the dazzling surface of Mortimer's character to leave him in any doubt as to its genuine value; and he knew that the love of a woman who could long persist in fancying she loved Mortimer could be of little worth to him. He clearly saw that Constance was struck and dazzled both by the talents and the reputation of his rival, but he had a strong conviction that this would pass away, and that Constance would discover, before her peace of mind was in any real danger,

'It were all one
That she should love some bright particular star,
And think to wed it,'—*he was so much below her.*'

People are apt, as Lady Dort said of her slender waist, to think of what they themselves possess; and so it was, perhaps, with Mr. Fitzosborne. He saw in Constance somewhat of the healthful, vigorous judgment that he felt within himself, and to this he trusted. Had she, however, while the trial was going on, given any indication of being capable of enduring the sort of public display to which Mr. Mortimer seemed inclined to expose her, the case would have been widely different, and all his interest in her brought to a conclusion, by his confessing to himself that he had been mistaken in her.

As she rose from her place in the manner that has been described, the philosophic observer turned towards the fire to hide a

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smile. 'No! I have not mistaken her!' thought he, 'and should I ever find that I have, I will never more trust to my reading of a woman's face.'

Having secured an occupation, Constance wanted to seat herself near the two ladies, now no longer occupied in a *tête-à-tête*, as Mr. Bradley had placed himself astride upon a chair behind the sofa, so as to bring his head very conveniently between theirs, and exactly on a level with both.

'What have you there, Miss Ridley?' demanded Lady Georgina.

'Oh! that dear book of noble children! Does not Nature show herself to be most decidedly an aristocrat there? Such admirable likenesses!—and oh! so heavenly lovely!'

Lady Dort seized upon the theme skilfully enough, setting Lord Willoughby, and Fitzosborne, and Mortimer all upon it; and many clever things were said, all of which were saucily travestied by Bradley, and laughter succeeded to philosophy, till recalled again by the plaintive sensibility of Lady Georgina, or the sublime enthusiasm of Lady Dort.

And then a movement was made towards a distant table, for the purpose of examining some precious new acquisition obtained from some unknown region, or from some newborn science; and again the conversation sparkled brightly, and Constance listened with delight. While the party were yet standing, some object on the table particularly attracting the attention of the novice, she bent her person slightly and very gracefully forward to examine it.

'So stands the statue that enchants the world!' exclaimed Mr. Bradley, suddenly drawing a small sketch-book with its pencil from his pocket.

'Stand still for one moment, I entreat you, Miss Ridley,' he added, hastily turning over the pages of the book till he found a blank one. 'That attitude is exquisite!—for pity's sake let me take it.'

'Oh, *do!*' exclaimed Mortimer. 'For heaven's sake move not!'

'Delightful!' cried Lady Dort.

'Enchanting!' said Lady Georgina.

'She will not,' murmured Fitzosborne inaudibly.

Constance smiled slightly, and changed her attitude, but so quietly as hardly to indicate a refusal, and then taking up some object from the table, addressed a few words of observation upon it to Lady Georgina.

'Barbarous girl!' ejaculated Lady Dort. 'How can you annihilate hope with that tranquil aspect, as if you knew not that our wishes lay palpitating at your feet?—Cruel Constance!'

'I thought that you were only jesting,' replied Constance, replacing the little bronze she had been examining.

'Jesting, my charming Constance!—when did mortals ever prefer a more earnest prayer? Replace yourself, I implore you. Bradley! one touch from your masterly finger upon that fair form will suffice to restore it to the attitude so worthy of becoming immortal. For my-sake, sweet love, you must indeed!'

'O-no!' said Constance, shrinking exactly enough to avoid the painter's extended hand, and smiling in return for Lady Dort's rhapsody with an air of perfect good-humour; 'you must be jesting—I cannot have my picture taken;' and then quietly resuming her seat near the fire, she let the subject drop 'for lack of argument.'

Mr. Bradley was angry, Mr. Mortimer disappointed, and Lady Georgina vowed it was a sin.

Mr. Fitzosborne said nothing, but that hour was one of no light importance to him.

HOPE, THE UNDYING.

(Addressed to a desponding Friend, whose views of the Future were clouded by a gloomy Present.)

BY MAJOR CALDER CAMPBELL.

Hope will not die, but in some fashion new
Springs in our path, and shakes its healthful dew
Upon the spirit's season-faded leaves,
What time the world about us thickly weaves,
The darkest meshes of its dismal web!
Hope will not die, though crushed till e'en the ebb
Of very life upon us seems to creep,
Hushing all sorrow to a senseless sleep;
As piercing sleets and snows on some lone way
Drowse up the faculties of men, that stray
Bewildered in the Winter's night, and knit
In endless slumber up the cares that sit

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Heavily on the breast! Hope will not die,
Nor Reason quell the luminous lights that fly
Around her track, when, to beguile us, she
Whispers of verdure to the blighted tree,
Of youth and vigour to the ails of age—
Of primrose paths throughout life's pilgrimage—
Of softnesses and gladsomenesses still,
For such as long have known no change save ill,
Whose many changes are unchanging, each
Differing from each, yet speaking the same speech
Of dissonant complaint! Then let us woo
Hope, as the only key which can undo
The desperate doors that shut up in the mind
Thoughts that would wean us from our Adam-kind.

Let, then, no more upon thy spirit sit
A cloud, to cumber and o'ershadow it
With dark forebodings; mayst thou sweetly see
In Hope a lawful guest, whose visits we
Should take unto our breasts, as mothers do
Their first-borns, welcomed, wept o'er, smiled o'er too!
Oh! mind not those who tell thee all is sin
That doth not public adulation win.
Crime is not crime because men call it so,
Nor acts condemned above, because below
The ban of prejudice is on them poured!
Too long the crowd have followed and adored
The god, OPINION, voicing, as it stands,
A creed of error, cutting off men's hands,
And maiming limbs—if limbs and hands deny
Subservient homage to its bigotry!

'Sorrow (they say) is born of Sin!'—Not so!
Sin brings, but is not always sire of Woe!
It is not crime that makes *all* spirits sad,
But bodily corruption: and the mad
(That long have raved, cooped in a dungeon dark,
Afar from kindly men and song of lark,)
Are not less free from guilt in wildest mood,
Than many a wretch within whose sickly blood
Disease hath mingled poison,—making all
Earth's choicest pleasures taste of rue and gall.

There is no sin in many a pleasant thing
On which the tyrant CUSTOM spits—while bring
Deluded hypocrites and bigots fierce
Their branding implements to sear and pierce
The fame of such as—following Nature's laws—
Heed not the fallacies of any cause
That is not Truth's and Love's! O, still to me
Have both been dear! And man's desires should be
Controlled, not crushed; directed, not subdued;
Nor hating evil, though still loving good.
Hate dwells not with the angels; pity throws
Its alms where'er the plant of sorrow grows!
But love is only found in breasts that woo
The natural, the beautiful, the true;
Nor aught unbeautiful, nor aught untrue,
Is there in much the loud-voiced wrangling crew
Would stigmatize as such!

For me there is
A rapturous innocence in every kiss
The summer wind at midnight gives the flower,
The wintry wave at morning gives the shore,
In every tender impulse, which the soul
Feels, and would war against, if we the dole
Of prejudice receive! O! think not ill,
Where no ill is, in hearts that show how thrill

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Their fervencies of love,—their craving needs
Of flowers to cherish—it may be of weeds!—
O think no ill of such! no ill can be
In tender feelings! bend not thou the knee
At blind Opinion's shrine; at best 'tis built
Of ice, at which libations rich are spilt
Of the heart's heat! Sinless, be sure, is all
That prompts the willing tongue to musical
And truthful utterance of love,—or bids
The glowing heart shine through the joyous lids!
Sinless is love—as sinless as we deem
That deepest mystery—an infant's dream!

Then cherish Hope, which will not be cast down
By circumstance, or fortune, or the frown
Of fell disease, save for a fleeting space,
But through the darkness shows its smiling face;—
A star at midnight—breeze in heat of day,
When fervid summer drives the blood to play
At fever i' the veins;—warmth in the cold
Of frosty nights;—rich ore of sunny gold
In the hard iron rock;—rose in the waste,
And gushing fount in arid desert placed;—
A young child, fresh from God, and smiling sweet,—
Like angel robbed of wings, yet faint of feet
From touching earth. So Hope amidst us comes,
Deceiving oft, yet lending to life's glooms
A sunshine and repose, that hold us back
From whirlpool-deaths that lurk within the track
Where Suicide, with many a subtle lure,
Bids Care pursue, if Care would find a cure!
Heed not such temptings, dearest friend; be thou
Bold in thy love of duty—and thy brow
Bear honestly, and with a humble pride,
Amid the mouthing fools that would deride
All fealty to truth! Take Hope to be
Not thy sole staff, but thy companion free!

London, 1841.

THE PRIZE MASTER.

BY EDWARD HOWARD, AUTHOR OF 'RATTLIN THE REEFER,' &c.

The powerful and very graceful frigate, the Belinda, was lying-to about sixty miles to the eastward of the southernmost of the Bahama Islands. She had neither handed her topgallant sails, hauled up her foresail, or brailed her spanker. It was evident that she was kept ready for a fresh start. Though her maintopsail was lying to the mast, she continued to forge rapidly ahead. There was a staggering topgallant breeze, with very apparent indications of a fresh hand at the bellows, as Jack says, in the shifting of a quid.

The cause of this ill-brooked delay in the noble ship's course was seen pitching its lubberly-looking nose up and down against the bobbing sea, about a quarter of a mile to leeward. If called anything of the shipshape class, it might be named a topsail schooner, although for rig and build it seemed a very mockery of a sea-going vessel. It was a Yankee prize to the Belinda. An apology for the American ensign still streamed out at the gaff end, half its stars obliterated by age and filth—take care, uncle Jonathan, both of age and dirt, or your stars, like those on a worn flag, will go out one after the other, and nothing but stripes be left to you. The stripes of this ensign, however, were nearly as faint as the stars upon it, but, as an indemnity for this, the fly of it was frayed out into a few whips of unequal length. It was a sad symbol of America in its decadence, should any one be so ungenerous as to imagine her in the imbecility and decrepitude of dotage.

This flag was indeed so shabby a concern, that the officer who had boarded and taken possession of the vessel would not permit the English union jack, which he had brought with him in the boat, to be placed near such a filthy rag, even though above it. Therefore, one of the cutter's crew, a sort of a droll in his way, had, without orders, toggled a swab on to the halyards, and there it continued jeeringly over the American colours, now streaming out audaciously with the sharp breeze, now dropping its tails, and whipping the miserable piece of [illegible] beneath it.

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We will shortly describe this nondescript of a vessel. 'That is a bull,' exclaims the sagacious critic. Upon that point we will join issue when we have time, and until then content ourselves by asserting that it is nothing more than a very elegant figure of speech known by the imposing title of 'catachresis.' Then this nondescript may be described as being very broad across the beam, heavily and strongly built, and of burthen about three hundred tons. Her bows were as bluff as those of an alderman should be, who has fairly eaten his way up to his civic dignity. Her masts were low and stout; her foretopsail very large, whilst her fore and aft foresail was scanty to a ridiculous degree. Her standing rigging was, out of all proportion, thick and whitened by time and exposure to the weather.

She was deep-waisted and low in the water. Her principal peculiarity being a high and most capacious poop, over which swept the boom of her mainsail within four or five inches of her deck. She was steered by a tiller, and the man at the helm was let into a sort of box, which box was itself let into the deck, but still, whenever the boom gibed, the head and shoulders of the poor steersman were in great jeopardy.

The whole affair was of a most primitive description, a bundle of expedients, some of them clever, more of them awkward. The sails were old, and might be compared to Joseph's coat badly imitated, their colours being manifold, and much more distinguished for their variety than their brilliancy.

The cargo of this lovely craft consisted of fine American barrelled flour in the hold, and cask-staves and shingle boards on deck, the latter of which were piled so high that the lower reef of the foresail was obliged to be taken in.

With her high poop, and her cumbrous stowage upon deck, this vessel could not be supposed to be a very weatherly craft; and yet, when arrested in her course, she had every thing braced sharp upon the larboard tack, making the best of her way to the eastward, across the trade winds.

At this particular time we were attempting to wrest from imperial France the few remaining West India colonies that yet belonged to her; and the city and harbour of St. Domingo, in the island of Hayti, were rigidly blockaded by a squadron of our frigates, and by General Carmichael and a white and black army on shore, and the place was daily expected to surrender. In addition to this, our relations with America were in the most unsatisfactory state, and it was believed at Jamaica that war had already been declared between her and England, though official information of the fact was still wanting.

We speak from personal experience. At that crisis the Yankees hated the English with an intensity more than barbarian, and if the English did not fully reciprocate this feeling, it was merely because their aversion was a little tempered by the most withering contempt. It was revolting to humanity to see two of the most gallant nations on the earth mutually so much in the wrong.

It was to this sentiment of detestation that we must attribute the strange conduct of those on board the Yankee schooner. Of course the English frigate, the Belinda, came up with her as a royal mail would a donkey-cart, and shot after shot was fired at her, now just before her bows, now through her rotten sails; one ball even went and made a glorious clattering among her staves and shingles, but she would neither heave-to nor shorten sail—no, not a single tack or sheet would she start. The few people she carried went below, and nothing living was descried on board of her from the deck of the Belinda, but the black woolly head of a negro let into the steering-box which we have before described, now and then poked up, and showing its capacious rows of white teeth, and a gaunt, bony, lean black pig, that raced wildly fore-and-aft the vessel as the shot whistled over her.

The sudden apparition and disappearance of the black head was an inscrutable wonder to those on board the frigate, as it seemed to them to pop up miraculously through the deck, now here and now there.

Now, the captain of the Belinda, Sir Francis Fortescue, was a proud and an austere man, and, at first, he had determined to sink the contumacious chase, and thus have done with her; but nothing living appearing on board of her but a sort of magical head without a body hopping about the deck of the poop, he was curious to have the mystery solved. Old Christopher Crosstrees, the quartermaster on duty, gave another reason for the captain's sudden impulse of humanity. Criss had eyed the racing pig intently and hungrily for some time, (the ship's company had been a whole week six upon four,) and he delivered it as his opinion, oracularly, to the not unwilling ears of a lazy midshipman, that Sir Francis longed for a leg of fresh roast pork for dinner.

We cannot settle this nice point as to motives. The fact will serve our purpose better. The captain ordered the gunner, who was doing the hostile with one of the main-deck guns, to cease firing, and to house it, a half dozen pistols to be handed into the cutter, the cutter's crew to gird on their cutlasses, and then the sails of the frigate to be filled. Having forereached sufficiently on the Yankee, the cutter was lowered and sent with her crew and the third lieutenant to take possession of the chase, and bring her master and her supercargo, if she carried the latter, on board the Belinda.

Things are done quickly in the navy. Though the lumbering schooner still continued her course unchecked, the cutter was soon alongside of her, and the active young lieutenant, followed by four of the men, was seen springing over the low bulwark. The gallant young officer did not, however, take possession of the prize either peaceably, pleasantly, or very triumphantly. As he

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sprang upon the greasy deck, the racing anatomy of the black pig, which looked like two flitches of bacon built together, rushed between his legs, and flung him down with so much violence, that his sword entangling itself with his shins bruised them severely, and snapped itself in two in its pliant leathern sheath.

Of course the brave officer was considerately picked up by his boat's crew, who, with respect on one side of their mouths, and a merry grin upon the other, anxiously inquired if he was hurt. The dodging black head on the deck became at last stationary; its merry ebony jaws opened, and a laugh, a little louder than the bray of a jackass, grated on the ears of the mortified lieutenant.

'Handspike that ghost of a pig!' shouted Mr. Mildmay; 'haul the headsheets to windward, and back the foretopsail. I verily believe my shins are scraped as bare as a beef-bone in a mess of ten with about enough for four. Back the foretopsail, I say.'

'I says ye sha'n't; and I says tarnation seize your imperance, swaggering infarnal Britishers.'

'Knock that rascal down before the pig,' said the incensed lieutenant. This amiable preference was meant for a fierce-looking, red-faced young man of about thirty years of age, his features adumbrated by a straw hat with an immensity of brim. He was otherwise dressed in a light monkey-jacket, clean striped red and white trousers, a very white shirt open at the collar, no stockings, but particularly neat and jaunty shoes set off his feet. He made his sudden and angry appearance from the door that opened from the deck into the lofty cabin beneath the poop.

'Come, come, British stranger, I guess you'll just walk out of my schooner—it's a trespass, I tell ye—and sink me but I'll go for damages in one of your own courts of laar—stigger me!'

'Insolent scoundrel! here, Williamson, pinion the blackguard's arms behind him, and if he says another word, gag him with a marling-spike, or fill his rotten jaws with oakum.'

To this order of Mr. Mildmay there was rendered a man-of-war's obedience, that is to say, it was fully obeyed before it was well pronounced, and the surprised Yankee felt his two elbows jammed tightly together behind his back, and with one strong hand at the rear of his trousers, and another at the collar of his jacket, he was off his legs in a moment, and thus found himself *in transitu* over the side of his own vessel into the man-of-war's boat. Bawling 'murder!' and 'thieves!' he held on tightly to the top of the bulwark, when the ejection was suddenly suspended by a venerable man of the age of sixty, at least, emerging from the cabin.

We must be a little particular in the delineation of this character, as we suppose that his race must now be extinct, or nearly so, in the go-ahead United States. He wore a black beaver hat, the globular crown of which fitted closely to his skull, although in breadth of brim it fully equalled the hat of the younger American. Silvery and flowing locks hung profusely about his shoulders, and the whole of the sockets of his eyes were covered with the huge circular glasses of a pair of iron-rimmed spectacles. We imagine that these aids for the sight were a pair of veritable barnacles. His features were rounded, full and mild, and principally characterized by a funny solemnity, as if the man himself enjoyed his own gravity as an excellent joke. His collarless coat was cut quaker-wise, of a deep brown and coarse cloth, and decorated with immense white metal buttons. His flapped waistcoat of the same materials nearly reached his knees, and his continuations were fastened above his well-shaped calves with huge silver buckles. White cotton stockings of an unexceptionable purity were terminated by large high-heeled shoes adorned also with silver buckles. We must add to this a white linen cravat, with the two ends of the tie hanging down nearly to his waist, and the man stands before you.

So respectable, indeed, so imposing was the whole figure, that the haughty young English lieutenant, as the old man stepped forth upon the deck, involuntarily lifted his hat to him. This courtesy he of the large hat did not return.

'A quaker, I presume?' said Mr. Mildmay.

'No, I bain't. I am a Mister-Snuggleonian. I never deny my faith.'

Then turning to the young American, who was grinding through his teeth all manner of contorted curses, he said authoritatively, 'Son Zachariah Simpkins, blaspheme not.'

'What schooner is this?' said the lieutenant, taking out his tablets to note down the answer.

'Mine,' was the concise reply. 'And as it is mine, I charge you, Mr. Stranger Englisher, to quit my premises, or I'll make it a Congress affair in an eternity less than no time.'

'Come, no nonsense, sir; I respect your age, and there is something in your appearance that makes it very unpleasant to me to imagine I should be compelled to use personal force. Let us at least be civil to each other.'

'As civil as you please, islander. Take Zachariah into the treaty.'

'With all my heart, if he will hold his tongue, or even leave off his abuse.'

'Be quiet, Zachariah, or I'll larrup ye,' said the old man.' His son was as mute as a fish. At a motion from the lieutenant, the youth was released from the vice-like grasp of the English seamen, and he then came and placed himself before the young officer, looking rattlesnakes.

'Where do you come from?'

'No business of yours, Mr. Officer.'

'Where bound to?'

'Can't rightly say; that's my business.'

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'Well, we will make short work of it. It seems that you are determined to give me no satisfactory answers, so you and your son must get your papers and come on board the frigate. We will then see what Sir Francis Fortescue says to this contumacy. You are a good prize, no doubt.'

'A prize!—yes,' said the old man, waxing warm, 'if you are a pirate—not else. Papers! I tell ye, Mr. Youngster, I have got none; and aboard of your frigate I won't go, unless by force; and if by force, I'll make a state affair of it. Why, here am I peaceably following my lawful avocations on my own waters, and I have just as much right to send for your captain and first officer, and for his papers, as your captain has to send for me and my son. If that bain't logic, there's no snakes in Virginia.'

'Well, sir,' said the officer, 'you'll step into the boat alongside, and go and chop your logic with the captain.'

'Not unless you use force, and under protest. This is as good as a declaration of war I calculate. Use force, I beseech you!'

'With all possible pleasure, sir,' said Mr. Mildmay, taking him gently by the arm, and handing him to the coxswain of the cutter alongside. 'Here, Watkins, place this old gentleman nicely in the stern-sheets, and make him comfortable. You may wrap my boat-cloak about him.' So he was handed into the boat as tenderly as if he had been a young lady, all the time making protest against the violence in every inapplicable legal term he could remember, very civilly requesting the names of the boat's crew, as he intended to have them up before Congress as witnesses.

It was highly amusing to remark with what grave impudence each of the blue jackets handed in a purser's name as long as the maintop bowling, all of which the old Yankee repeated several times to himself in order to fix them in his memory.

'Now, sirrah!' said the lieutenant to Zachariah, who was showing fight by his looks, and spreading over his red countenance a mixture of toadstools and cayenne, 'get into the boat with the old gentleman.'

His father being now not near him, he was beginning to open the port-holes of his abuse battery. 'Varmint slave of a tyrant, use force, I say.'

'With all my heart,' said Mr. Mildmay, cutting the dialogue very short by twisting the Yankee round, and giving him a tremendous kick in the rear. He reeled over to leeward, and was there bundled into the boat neck and heels. But he had pluck in him, and was soon seen on his legs on one of the thwarts, apostrophizing the miserable stars and stripes that still hung at the peak of his schooner, and in their name he then and there solemnly declared war, on the part of the United States, against George the Third, King of Great Britain, and the universal tyrant and enslaver of the free seas.

Mr. Mildmay ordered the coxswain and three men to pull on board the frigate with the prisoners, and to tell the captain that he, Mildmay, and the rest of the boat's crew, would stay on board the schooner, and subject her to a strict search.

In that which we are going to relate, we assure our friends that there is not the least exaggeration. Thirty—alas! we fear we must say forty years ago, notwithstanding it unveils too much of the secret of our age—we have met with scores of vessels similar to that which, in its internal arrangements, we are going to describe. They were the greatest puzzles in the world to the English cruisers. They knew not what to do with them. They never carried either manifest, charter, clearance, or any papers whatever, and yet they performed voyages of more than a thousand miles, and were always contravening some of England's navigation laws.

At times they would carry a whole family, and the women and children on board of them would more than triple the number of the crew. They always called themselves coasting vessels, and their modesty only claimed the whole of the western hemisphere as embraced in their right of sailing without charter-parties, bills of lading, or, in fact, with any other document.

The spacious cabin beneath the poop Mr. Mildmay found to be fitted up exactly like the kitchen of a farm-house. A large brick-built fire-place, with seats at each corner, was the first thing that astonished him. There were hams smoking near it, and shelves all about it well supplied with cheeses. But the climax of his wonder was, in seeing clothes-lines across the cabin, and two or three things, applicable only to children of a tender age, still hanging to dry. Why the fire of the cabin was preferred to the sun and wind on deck, the lieutenant was at a loss to surmise, unless it were for the convenience of suddenly snatching up the aforesaid little necessaries for infancy. From this he concluded that there must be children, perhaps women, somewhere concealed on board.

The following were the results of the closest investigation:—two young negroes appeared to be all the crew; the live stock consisted only of the wild and not to be approached black pig; the vessel was laden with the finest American flour in the fore, and all manner of dry provisions in the after-hold. No papers of any description could be discovered. Neither were there any nautical almanac or ephemeris, or any nautical books whatever—no charts, no log-book, log-board, or log-line; the only thing visible at all appertaining to navigation was a huge, uncouth quadrant, much more like the old sun-staff, or the ancient astrolabe, than the modern instruments used for taking the altitude of the heavenly bodies.

On one side of the fire-place hung a silver watch, nearly as large as an iron ninepound shot, and on the other a tin skimmer, remarkably bright, and which spoke volumes

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for the good housewifery of some person unknown.

By the time that the cutter had returned, Mr. Mildmay had taken notes, and made an inventory of everything that he had observed. He then stepped into the boat, and leaving two men in charge of the schooner, he repaired on board of his own ship in order to make his report.

It was the two men left in temporary charge of the prize who had hoisted the swab over the American ensign.

The scene on board the quarter-deck of the Belinda was now a very curious one. The admiral on the Jamaica station was all but confident that war had been already declared between England and America, and the Belinda, being the finest frigate in the West Indies, was sent forth to meet some of the immense ships, miscalled frigates also, who were eager to pounce upon John Bull. Three sickly seasons had played havoc with the English frigate's crew. Short as she was of her very short complement, very many even of those were debilitated. And how much depended upon the first encounter! What was Sir Francis Fortescue to do with his Yankee prize? Really he did not know.

The stern propriety and grim grandeur of the Belinda's warlike quarter-deck had considerably subdued the tone and the manner both of father and son. They were still independent, and loud against the injustice of their detention. They would give no information, and stoutly maintained that they had as much right to be where they were found as the frigate herself. Old Obadiah Simpkins maintained, firstly, that he was coasting in his own waters, and when shown the spot by observed latitude and longitude on the chart, he said, without conceding the point, that, at least, he was rightfully on the grand thoroughfare open to all nations.

When the English captain insisted on the right of search, Obadiah laughed at him on his own quarter-deck, and claimed it too, and very pompously proposed taking Sir Francis and his first lieutenant on board his own craft, as he could examine their papers in his own cabin much more pleasantly and conveniently.

'I am particularly considerable sure, Mister Sir Baronet, that what's good law for the Britisher is good law for the freeborn native of the glorious Union; so, if you lend me your boat, and tumble into it with your right hand man and the dockyments, I'll feel obleeged transcendently by that same.'

To this speech of the old gentleman with the ample spectacles Sir Francis muttered something about putting him in irons, to which threat the Yankee only smiled grimly, and said, that if he dared to do so, 'Our president would whip the total earth from under the feet of King George in an unreckonable marvellous short minimum of time.'

But when Mr. Mildmay came on board and made his report, Sir Francis did not hesitate to pronounce the schooner a good and lawful prize. The lieutenant had gathered from one of the negroes that the vessel's name was the 'Ark of Bethel,' that she had no papers on board, and, in fact, never carried any; that she came from a small fishing village south of Baltimore, and that she had started neither tack nor sheet since she commenced her voyage; that she never did so in those sort of runs, and that the vessel was so trimmed to sail on a wind, that the helm was seldom touched. The black added, that they generally fetched one of the weathermost West India islands, and then ran down them all, disposing of the cargo in the unfrequented parts, either French or English, without regard to the law of blockade, and, indeed, always doing a great deal of contraband business with the natives of either nation.

When Sir Francis had heard all this, and learned the nature of the cargo of the Ark of Bethel, he had not the least doubt that she intended to break the blockade either of the principal ports of Martinique or Guadaloupe, or, failing to fetch these, to relieve the famished garrison and inhabitants of St. Domingo, which were now known to be reduced to extremity.

Had Obadiah or his fiery son succeeded in either of these speculations, at the least two hundred per cent. upon the value of the cargo would have been their reward. The bitterness of their animosity against England may well be understood.

'Well, sir,' said the captain of the frigate, turning sharply upon his ancient prisoner, 'you see that we know enough to condemn your vessel as lawful prize in any admiralty court in the civilized world. In the first place, you are found on the high seas without any papers whatever, consequently you come under the designation of a pirate.'

'A pirate!' said the old man, flashing with indignation. 'You and me, Mr. Islander, had better change names. I am going quietly on my own natural waters, on a Christian mission of charity, unarmed and in peace, to feed the hungry with good things, to save dear mothers and little innocent piccaninies, not a foot long, from having their entrails wasted to death by famine; you meet me, with swords and great cannon, and other huge instruments of war, and by violence baulk my humane purpose, and rob me and mine of the fruits of my toil of a long life;—who now is the pirate?—speak, man of rapine!'

'Ay, speak to that ere splendiferous gab of father's. I swamp and swear'—thus commenced the outbreak of Zacharlah.

'Gag that Yankee hound with a monkey's tail if he dares again open his pestilent lips,' said the captain. 'Come, to end all this insolence, know that you are a prize in twenty shapes. But what to do with you I hardly can tell. I think that I had better sink you at once, and thus cut the matter short.

But when Mr. Mildmay came on board and den pang to both the prisoners, that their countenances changed to a deathly hue, and

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each of them started from their feet;—the anguish of both was uncontrollable.

'Spare the stout old craft,' said the elder, 'it has long been my dwelling-place and my home.'

'No, no, captain,' said the now much-humbled Zachariah, 'you never can be so cantankerous cruel as all that. Why, bless your honour,' (it was the first time in his life that he had used the term,) I was born, and papped, and lapped in she.'

Sir Francis and his officers retired to the after part of the quarter-deck to consult upon this dilemma. In the first place, in the critical situation of the Belinda as regarded the strength of her crew, it was held that they could not afford so much as a couple of hands and an officer to take the prize into the nearest English port. Every officer, even to the youngest midshipman, dreaded to be appointed her prize-master, as they were all eager, or pretended to be so, not to be absent from the Belinda at the expected encounter with one of the crack American frigates.

During this discussion, the first lieutenant cast his eyes from time to time on old Christopher Crosstrees, who was standing at his station on the hammock-nettings, acting inattention, yet remarking and treasuring up every word of the conference. The sly quarter-master, when he found himself the object of the officer's scrutiny, commenced with his technical admonitions to the man at the helm, being all very judicious and very needless, as the ship was lying to.

'Sir Francis,' said the first luff, most anxious neither to lose his share of the prize, nor a single man who had strength enough to bouse on the gun-tackles, 'there is *old* Christopher Crosstrees there—'

'Not three-and-fifty yet,' muttered the quarter-master; then, in his loudest tones, 'Give her a couple of spokes to leeward, bo; you let her fall off too much.'

'A good seaman, but, as he says to the man at the wheel, falls off too much,' continued the lieutenant, 'and he is quite weak in his left arm. They say that he has had a good education—'

'You may say that, old flinty face,' (in an under tone)—'very well, dice, dice,'* (aloud.) These were the interlocutions of the quarter-man.

'And I have no doubt can keep a ship's reckoning better than one at a public-house. Indeed, if he were not the damnedst impertinent old scoundrel when a little breezy, I must say this for him, not a better fellow, or a more trustworthy seaman, ever stepped from stem to stern than old Crosstrees. It is a pity that he will be getting a cloth or so in the wind whenever he can come within hail of the grog-bottle.'

'Give her the weather helm,' said the old boy; 'the leach of the foretopsail is all of a shiver.' He then looked down like a penitent jade who had just been condemned for two months' hard labour in the house of correction.

'Now, Sir Francis, I would propose this:—put him on board as prize-master, taking care first, by a sharp search, that there is nothing left on board the schooner with which he can possibly get drunk. Give him another hand, and that, with one of the negroes already on board of her, will be quite sufficient. Of course, Sir Francis, we will send the stiff old Yankee on board his craft again. There seems to be a good deal of hard work in him yet, and, when required, he could do good service at the tail end of a rope.'

'Why, Mr. Chivers, the plan seems feasible enough. Crosstrees, his man, and the negro—for we will take care to let the black know that he shall have his freedom if he behave well—will surely be able to keep the vessel against the old preacher. So let it be, if upon examination we find that the quarter-master understands sufficient of navigation for the charge.'

Not a single word of all this had escaped the wily old quarter-master; yet, when he was called to the knot of officers, he looked as unconscious as a lamb, as he seized one of the fore-locks of his iron-grey hairs in token of reverence to the presence in which he stood.

Christopher's answers were most satisfactory. He had the discretion not to appear too eager for the command, and yet he confessed that he resigned without reluctance his honourable chance of sharing in the glory of the anticipated action with the American frigate. The good sense, the somewhat superior language, and the nice tact of the ancient mariner, surprised Sir Francis Fortescue, and he became very desirous of knowing more of his history; so, when he was ordered to go down below and get his bag and hammock ready, the captain intimated this desire to the first lieutenant.

'Sir Francis,' was the reply, 'there is a great deal of mystery about that man. It is evident that he is not wanting in the advantages of a good education, and that he has moved in a higher rank than that in which he now appears. Drunkenness and insolence have been his ruin. It is, however, to his drunkenness that we owe the little information that we have of him. In his fits, he speaks of having high connexions, talks of his brother the baronet, of his having been an officer in the service, and having been broken for his intemperance. When sober, he is kindly hearted, though sullen and wayward in his manner, and is usually nicknamed by his messmates and shipmates Criscross. When intoxicated, nothing can exceed the swaggering of his insolence, and the vastness of his self-conceit.'

'Well,' said the captain, 'I will see him alone, and form my own opinion. As to his predilection for the bottle, we will take care as to that. What is your opinion of his integrity?'

'True blue, to the heart's core.'

Christopher Crosstrees soon reported himself ready. He was then ordered into the captain's cabin, where Sir Francis kindly,

* 'The sea slang pronunciation of 'thus.'

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but most rigidly, inquired into his capabilities for his temporary command. He was surprised at the extent of his information; many a reefer had passed his examination for lieutenant who could not have answered the searching questions that were put to Crosstrees in seamanship, and navigation especially, with half the old man's sagacity.

'I had no idea that I had such a treasure on board,' said the pleased commander. 'I hardly know how to make up my mind to part with you. Christopher Crosstrees, you have seen better days.'

'Assuredly, Sir Francis, and I trust to see better still—that is, if—if—'

'If you can avoid the infirmity of much drink. Well, I'll do my best to reform you. Not a drop of anything intoxicating shall be left on board your command. This lengthened privation may break you off from the detestable habit altogether.'

'I am heartily—I am deeply grateful to you, Sir Francis,' was the sincere and respectful reply.

The captain, well satisfied with the selection that he had made, proceeded to give Crosstrees his written order, and then his instructions in writing also. He was directed, when he got on board, to put the schooner on the starboard tack, and, keeping her full and by, to reach as far to the northward with the trade wind as he could, and then, when it failed him, and he had got into the variables, if his easting were good, to make at once for England. If he could not safely do this, to go for St. John's, Newfoundland, or for Halifax.

'It is no use,' continued the captain, 'sending this Yankee to any of the admiralty courts in our islands. In the first place, everything is there done not to condemn these smuggling neutrals; and then, if we get them condemned, all the agents are Jews and rogues. Get to England as fast as you can, Crosstrees; and I trust that we shall be soon there after you, with a long wall-sided American frigate in tow.'

'I hope your honour may, with all my heart and soul. If I might presume, Sir Francis, to offer my humble advice, and you should fall in with one of these seventy-fours, built frigate-wise to cheat old England of her glory, don't play with her at long bowls, but close with her, and board her at once. I know these Yankees well;—they don't like the look of an Englishman's eye when his blood's up. Clap Jonathan in the bush, behind a stone wall, or the stock of a tree, with a rifle in his hand, and who so brave as he! Or at the tail of his long two-and-thirty pounder, on his roomy maindeck, he ain't bad neither. Yet, after all, his courage is that of the wild cat—grip him by the throat, and he'll squeak small. I have found it, Sir Francis, and I humbly beg your pardon for my boldness, but I couldn't help it.'

'Well,' thought the captain, 'Mr. Chivers is right as to the fellow's impudence. I won't be angry with him, however, and the advice of the old should not be despised.'

Though Sir Francis thus remonstrated with himself, his manner unconsciously became more cold and haughty, for who likes to be counselled by one held to be an inferior? The first lieutenant was then sent for, and orders given to him that a strict search should be made for everything in the shape of liquid alcohol on board the prize, and if any were found, to be taken away. These orders were scrupulously obeyed, and sundry bottles of rum, and four casks of good hard cider, were consequently conveyed on board the frigate.

'And now,' said the captain to Christopher, 'you may choose any one man, not a petty officer, from the frigate, to form your ship's company.'

'Why, please your honour, as I am to have the old gentleman and the stoutest of the negroes, and as a rig of that sort's easily managed, if you'll give me Knockity Nick, the foolish lad, I'm content. The poor idiot loves me, and I can do what I like with him. And now I think of it, he would mope and die if I left him behind. Sir Francis, he is of no mortal use in the frigate without me.'

'And Christopher is in the right,' said Mr. Chivers, happy to exchange an active black for a moon-struck youth. 'We are in the finest season of the year, and I have no doubt that Crosstrees will find his way to England, Halifax, or St. John's, without difficulty.'

A quadrant, two or three charts, an old glass, and a John Hamilton More being supplied to the prize-master, and the happy innocent, Crosstrees' ship's company, placed with his bag and hammock in the boat alongside, nothing now remained to be done but to part the American father and son, who were by turns chafing with anger, and shivering with dread on the frigate's gangway.

Their dismay was unbounded when they heard the sentence of their separation. Both of them now, in the humblest tones, with anguish in their countenances, and with tears streaming down their faces, begged to be permitted to return to their home, their only home, their old-fashioned schooner. They tendered the most solemn oaths that they would not only be obedient to the authority of the prize-master, but assist him with all their powers in the navigation of the vessel, and do their best to aid him to bring her safely and speedily to an English port.

But, from prudential motives, Sir Francis Fortescue was inexorable. Then the old man, seeing that there was no hope of being permitted to return with his son on board the schooner, would have gone on his knees to the captain had he not been prevented, as he implored him, if they must be separated, that he, the father, might remain a prisoner in the hands of his enemies, and that his son might return *home*.

Though dreadfully affected, the son appeared to suffer this sacrifice of his father's liberty without opposition, or even remon-

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strance, and more than one of the English officers expressed aloud their disgust at the flinty-hearted young cub.

Lieutenant Mildmay, who had boarded and searched the Ark of Bethel, spoke with Sir Francis aside, and told him that he suspected there were children somewhere concealed on the vessel, from certain indications that he had observed in the cabin.

Sir Francis, a little moved at this family distress, thus addressed the Americans: 'My friends, I pity your misfortunes, but I must do my duty. There is every reason to suppose that hostilities have already commenced, and neither you are, nor I am, answerable for the miseries that war must inevitably entail upon the unoffending of both nations. I cannot afford to weaken my crew by sending on board the prize so many hands as would make it prudent to let both of you sail in a vessel that I know you believe to be rightfully your own, and of which you would possess yourself on the first opportunity that offered itself. The same argument holds good in a less degree against permitting this wild, active, young fellow to repair on board the schooner, instead of his weaker, more prudent, and more quiet father. But the prize-master shall himself decide the question. Come hither, Crosstrees. You have heard all that has taken place. Now look this saucy American full in the face, and tell me what you think of him. Armed as you will be, and keeping him away from all arms, do you think you would be afraid of him?'

There was much of contempt in the old quarter-master's look. But the tone of his voice was quiet. He said, 'I have no doubt but that he is a spirited young chap, and, for his own safety, not for mine, it would be as well to put him on his parole, for he may depend upon it, that at the least sign of mutiny that he should show, I should pistol him with as little remorse as I would shoot a mad dog.'

'Well, I will take his solemn pledge and word of honour, if his father will join in it, not to offer any molestation or impediment to the prize-master, and then suffer him to go on board, and where he likes afterwards, when he has been examined before the public authorities, so as to secure the condemnation of the vessel. Will you give me your solemn pledges?'

'Most eagerly, most heartily,' exclaimed the father.

'Upon the honour of a true-blooded American,' said the son.

'Well,' said Sir Francis, 'we'll merely have it drawn up in writing, and signed. Here, Mr. Scatterink,' turning to his clerk, 'just draw up the pledge in the strongest terms you can; and now,' continued the captain, addressing Zachariah, 'tell me frankly if there be any people concealed on board!'

Zachariah looked remarkably foolish, and the corners of his mouth quivered up and down between a smile and a cry.

'Ah, honoured captain,' said the old American, 'you have in that craft stronger hostages for Zacchy's good behaviour, than all the pledges and words of honour that were ever given.'

'That's a lie, father—a true born American's word——'

'In a wife, and two of the beautifullest babbies.'

'And yet you tell me you have searched this vessel thoroughly,' said the captain reproachfully to Mr. Mildmay.

'Not the least in fault in the varsal world,' said Obadiah Simpkins. 'The stow-hole was built on purpose to deceive the prying Britishers.'

'This will never do, Crosstrees—this will never do. There may be puncheons of rum and rivers of whiskey in the same place,' observed Sir Francis.

'I give you my solemn assurance, sir,' said the father, 'that every drop of strong drink has been brought on board here.'

'Ay, is it so? then we must think of the lady. Tell my steward to put into the boat one dozen of port, one of sherry, and one of Lisbon, all of the best sort; and Crosstrees, you dog, do you mark? if ever it comes to my knowledge that you touched a drop of it, why, you will have deceived me like a base scoundrel.' Then turning to Zachariah, 'Give my compliments to your wife, sir, and beg her acceptance of this wine, and tell her, and you will tell her as true a thing as ever you uttered, that I am grieved to the very heart to be compelled to afflict her so much in the execution of my duty.'

'You are a shear-steel gentleman to the back bone,' said the younger Yankee, 'and I am proud to come of the same stock—mightily!'

'A strange sail two points on the lee bow!' sang out the man from the maintopgallant mast head.

'What does she look like?' hailed the captain.

'Looms very large, your honour.'

'Where's the young gentleman of the watch?'

'Here, Sir Francis.'

'Sling your glass—away aloft—and do your best to make her out.'

'Ay, ay, sir,' said the middy, scudding up the rattlins a great deal quicker than a London lamplighter shindies up his ladder.

'We have no time to lose—not an instant to lose,' said Sir Francis impatiently. 'Into the boat with you all. Let the old gentleman go and take leave of his daughter-in-law and grandchildren. We must find time for that. I'm a family man myself. You will return on board, sir, and bring with you your traps, and all that is necessary to your comfort. But, God bless you, be expeditious. Away with you!'

Crosstrees took possession of the schooner. The parting of the family with its venerable head was distressing; but everything was hurried, for the cutter was hardly on board the schooner before the frigate hoisted a

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whiff for her return, and five minutes after the signal was enforced by a gun. The cutter returned with one of the negroes and Obadiah Simpkins: no sooner was she alongside than she was hoisted up to the quarter, the mainsail filled, and all possible sail made.

Hostilities *had* commenced with America.

The Belinda, with her gallant but incomplete and enfeebled crew, was hastening to her destiny. It was a sad one—one, though not of victory, yet not without glory.

Christopher Crosstrees is now fully installed in his command. He is a PRIZE-MASTER. We assure our readers that in all we have related there is but little fiction. We have not only described the true thing, but the manner in which it was conducted. In a future paper we may detail in what fashion the old quarter-master commanded his prize, to what fate he led her, how he treated his strange crew and his prisoners, and finally we may give the biography of the idiot sailor lad.

COME, DRINK TO THE KING OF THE LYRE.

DEDICATED TO THOMAS MOORE, ESQ.

"The poet of all circles, and the idol of his own."

BY MRS. CRAWFORD.

COME, drink to the King of the Lyre,
Come, bow to his magical sway,
For his is the true attic fire,
That can only with Nature's decay.
He has won all the gems from the mine;
Earth and ocean have yielded their store,
Till his brow is as bright as the shrine
That the worshipping pilgrims adore.

When he comes in the pride of his song,
To wake all the echoes of earth,
He sweeps like a meteor along
From the cloud of its mystical birth.
O, *he* is the wizard to weave
The spell of the magical tone:
He speaks and we hardly believe
That he breathes the same tongue as our own.

In the web his bright fancy has spun,
He has mingled the hues of the skies,
And his metaphors glow like the sun,
In the depth of their beautiful dyes:
Like the strains of his own lovely isle,
He mixes the sad with the gay;
He can rainbow our hearts with a smile,
Or melt them in softness away.

Some with beautiful language delight,
Some with pathos our feelings enthral,
Some with reason, or fancy more bright—
But *he* has the gift of them all!
Come, drink to the King of the Lyre,
Come, bow to his magical sway,
For his is the true attic fire,
That can only with Nature's decay.

THE NOTE-BOOK OF AN IRISH BARRISTER.—No. XX.

LORD PLUNKETT.

LORD PLUNKETT remained long insensible to the importunities of his friends, who were anxious to see him in parliament. They knew the certainty of his success, but he either thought differently, or did not wish to hazard a reputation which was fully rewarded and appreciated in his own country. Curran called him the 'Irish Gylippus,' and was of opinion that in the British senate his eloquence and argumentative powers would distance all competition. Being at length prevailed on to try his fortunes in that perilous field, where it had long been supposed so sickly a plant as Irish oratory could take no root, he was returned for the University of Dublin in 1812, which he continued to represent while he was a member of the House of Commons. His fame had preceded him; but in proportion to the high opinions entertained of his powers was the danger he incurred. He was now on a strange theatre, where some of the most eminent men that Ireland produced had failed to command the 'applause of listening senates,' and he had the modesty to doubt the effect of his unrivalled powers on the fastidious taste of an audience whose boast is, that it is more swayed by reason than susceptibility, and that the orator who aspires to vanquish it must use the weapons of argumentative rather than of impassioned speaking. Irish eloquence was deemed little better than unthinking declamation, and of course unfitted for this high court of reason. Such Irishmen as had the power to force parliamentary admiration were curiously enough set down as no Irishmen at all, though the unequivocal genuineness of their racy brogue at once proved the land of their nativity; or, what is equally curious, and just as satisfactory to common sense, all their prodigious success was attributed to the extraordinary influences of an English atmosphere, which corrected all the grosser impurities, and brought out the bullion in its pure and shining state. These men were not 'mere Irish,' they passed under the more refined name of Anglo-Irish, and their splendid triumphs were ascribed to the high degree of polish they acquired from their connection with English society, just as if a few years' residence could alter the constitution of the human mind, and substitute a new set of intellectual qualities for those derived from early training and education. Mr. Plunkett proved in himself the absolute unsound-

* Continued from page 217.

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ness of this strange heresy. It could not be well said of him that his rough angles were rubbed off by constant intercourse with English society, and that he had cast aside the old slough to appear in a new and un-Irish form. He was a pure unmixed specimen of native power, fresh from the Liffey, unacquainted with the arts and artifices of statesmanship, and trusting for success solely to the influence of eloquence and argument. The result was not for a moment doubtful. His surpassing merits took the senate completely by surprise. They expected to hear from him much that was forcible, fanciful, and passionate—profusion of imagery and exaggeration of sentiment, but very little of the clear, sober and practical. He astonished them by the thorough purity of his style, although he had learned in a school in which, to quote a critical canon prevalent with our neighbours, 'all the fresh and rude virtues flourished which mark the transition from savage life to comparative refinement.' Mr. Plunkett soon convinced them that an Irish orator was somewhat in advance of a Chippewa chief, or of children who are ever mistaking finery for elegance, and flowers for fruit—that he could be, in fact, a man of business and practice, exhibiting sound and solid attainments. He threw on the adversaries of Irish eloquence the burthen of proving in what respects an English differed from an Irish speaker, and whether the style of the one country was not characterized by as much true and healthy thought, by as much chasteness of sentiment, and strength and propriety of expression, by as much weight of argumentation, and as much practical knowledge of the common affairs of life, as that of the most favoured orators on the other side of the Channel.

His first experiment in the British parliament was on Mr. Grattan's motion for Catholic relief, which placed his reputation as an orator among the most exalted of the age. Before his appearance, the merits of that important question had been comparatively unknown. It had often been discussed by energetic advocates on both sides, but it remained for him to place it in a moral, social, and political light, through which it had never before been contemplated. He paralyzed the House by his stupendous powers of logic and eloquence. 'The fire of his magnificent mind,' said Grattan with noble enthusiasm, 'was lighted by coals from ancient altars, in the delivery of that unrivalled speech.' It was from beginning to end a stream of the closest argument. It would be difficult to select any one passage for extraction, for its power consists more in the fine proportions and consummate unity of the whole than in separate bursts; but we take the following, which, as a specimen of unanswerable logic, is unequalled.

'The topic that toleration admits of one consideration, and political power of another, has little application to this case, even if it were true; for here it must be contended that rank and station and honour are not the proper appendages of wealth and knowledge and education, and of everything which constitutes moral and political strength. In every system of human policy the few must govern the many, but their legitimate government must arise from their superiority in wealth and knowledge; if, therefore, you exclude the wealthy and educated, you throw into the scale of the many the only weight which could have preserved the balance of the state itself. This is universally true; but when you reject the opulent and the educated on account of a condition which they have in common with the many, you add the attraction of politics and party to the operation of general and moral causes; and if the principle of exclusion be a religious one, you organize the principles of furious and interminable revolution. Put the policy of the separation of political rank from property and education in the extreme case of their total division, or in any intermediate degree, the conclusion is equally true, that the attempt to separate establishes a principle, not of government, but of the dissolution of all government. So sensible of this truth were our ancestors that when they saw, or thought they saw, a necessity for dishonouring the Roman Catholic, they adopted as a necessary consequence the policy of impoverishing and barbarizing him. That policy was consistent—the means had a diabolical fitness for the end. What have we done? We have trod back their steps, we have rescued the Catholics from the code which formed at once their servitude and our safety, and we fancy we can continue the exclusion from civil station which superinduced that code. Theirs was not a real or fancied necessity, but a consistent system; we pretend no necessity, and we have voluntarily abdicated the means of safety, and we wilfully and uselessly continue the causes of danger. The time to have paused was before we heaved from those sons of earth the mountains which the wisdom or terrors of our ancestors had heaped upon them, but we have raised them up, and placed them erect; are we prepared to hurl them down and bury them again?'

The instances in the British senate are very rare where eloquence has triumphed over the prejudices of party, where the most powerful arguments have had the effect of gaining over a single vote. It has been truly remarked, that if Demosthenes were to speak in the House of Commons, his oratory would go for nothing, so far as its influence on the division were taken as a test of success. Every member having predetermined to pursue a certain line of policy, all the oratory of Greece or Rome would be lost on his stubborn prejudices or passions. Parties might as well divide without any discussion, for debates seem to have no direct power, and are only useful in the formation or correction of public opinion. Mr. Plunkett's speech was an exception; for he gained over some Scotch members who were systematically adverse to the Catholic claims, and confirmed some of his own party who were

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wavering in their allegiance. Of this speech Sir James Mackintosh said, 'Plunkett's has made a deeper impression than any speech since Sheridan's, in 1783, on the charge against Hastings respecting the Begum of Oude. It is, I believe, the only speech which has been known to determine the votes of several individuals. For the honour of Scotch conscience I am happy to say that it was the direct and sure cause of two Scotchmen, Mr. A. and Mr. F. The last is enthusiastic in his admiration of Plunkett. The members of the House of Commons were more influenced by his speech than any other in modern times.' Such was the opinion of a very high authority on the effects of Mr. Plunkett's eloquence, which was allowed by all to be of the most elevated character, and that at a time when the Commons boasted of a Wyndham, a Wilberforce, a Canning, Horner, Brougham, and Romilly. One of the great secrets of his parliamentary success was, that he rarely took part in debates except on subjects connected with Ireland, with which he had a most extensive acquaintance, and on which he could never be taken by surprise. The principal instance in which he deviated from this safe and prudent course was a memorable one—the debate on the Manchester riots—where he acted a conspicuous part. For his conduct on that occasion he has been much blamed. He has been charged with abandoning his popular principles with a view to advance his own interests, and sanctioning a violation of constitutional liberty to gratify his own ambition. His famous speech was no doubt a powerful support to the ministry, but in justice to Mr. Plunkett it should be borne in mind that some of the most influential of the Whig party, among them Lord Grenville, adopted the same line of policy. When the public liberty or safety is in peril, it is the duty of every honest citizen to say with the Roman, 'Non me impedient publicæ lites vel privatæ offensiones, quo minus pro republicæ salute etiam cum inimicissimo consentiam,'—and it would be absurd to deny that the crisis was a menacing one, and required the application of an instant remedy. The government erred on the side of despotism—all the guarantees of freedom were put in abeyance; but why accuse Mr. Plunkett for an excess which he could not correct or control? We are happily removed from those times, and we hope the period will never again arrive, when a meeting of the people to petition for redress will be dispersed by shot or sabre; but great discontent, not unmingled with strong revolutionary feelings, then pervaded the working classes in England; and Mr. Plunkett, knowing the contagious character of insurrection and the influence which the example of England in disorder was likely to produce on the inflammable Irish mind, stung by the repeated refusals of parliament, took his stand not so much to assist the government in its arbitrary violence, as to keep in check the swelling indignation at home.

We now bring him back to Ireland. While Saurin was Attorney-general, the celebrated case of O'Grady and the Crown was heard, to which we alluded in our notice of Chief Justice Bushe. The Chief Baron was the early friend and patron of Mr. Plunkett, and he retained him with an ample fee of five hundred pounds, knowing well that money is the greatest stimulant to exertion. The Attorney-general stated the case with that calm and simple clearness which characterized him, and he was replied to by Mr. Plunkett. The cord of friendship had of late years been rather lax between the two great lawyers, for Mr. Plunkett felt, though he did not openly express it, that Saurin was a sort of usurper in the high office he held. He meditated revenge, and he had it. His speech was a torrent of burning invective; he fiercely attacked the unbecoming conduct of the law advisers of the crown, and menaced them with impeachment. Saurin bitterly felt the personalities,—his rival apologized, but the wound had been inflicted, and their ancient friendship was never, we believe, fully restored. A change of administration, in 1822, renewed the official fortunes of Mr. Plunkett. Saurin was displaced from the attorney-generalship after a tenure of fifteen years; he was offered the chief-justiceship, but he aspired to the seals, and he dallied with the offer, until Bushe at last secured it as the just reward of his genius and his services. Mr. P. was at once named Attorney, with Joy as Solicitor-general.

The union in office of the representatives of such opposite principles was strange enough, but political compounding was a vast favourite with the Marquis of Wellesley, who sought the amalgamation of parties, and endeavoured to work out the true theory of Irish administration from the crucible in which liberalism and Toryism were oddly mixed together. The process, however, was unsuccessful; the famous Bottle Riot soon occurred, and the prosecution of the upper gallery conspirators followed. The accused were indicted for 'conspiring to raise a riot and disturbance in the theatre whilst the Lord Lieutenant was present therein, and wickedly, unlawfully, riotously and *routously*, to insult and assault the said Lord Lieutenant in said theatre; and for that they, for the purposes and in pursuance of such conspiracy, did print and prepare divers papers on which were written the words "No Popery," and others on which were written the words "The Protestants want Talbot, and the Protestants have got all but!! and Fleming, though he has the mace, will find it hard to keep his place;" and others in which were written the following of and concerning the most noble the Marquis of Wellesley, that is to say, "Ex-Governor of the Bantams will change his Morning—tone," with intent to disperse said papers in said theatre,' &c. &c. Joy's situation was a very novel one: all his life was devoted to that very cause which he was now called on to impugn. He was very reluctant to compromise his old character,

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and he would cheerfully bolt, had he the power. But his colleague pinned him to his new faith, by stating in the commencement that the high talents, enlightened information, and extensive knowledge of his brother Solicitor assisted him in every step of the prosecution, and that to his cordial zeal and co-operation no terms could be sufficiently strong to render justice, and express his gratitude! Joy was too old a gudgeon to be caught with such a bait; he laughed in his heart at the nailing process so dexterously attempted by the Attorney-general; but as the disagreeable burden was imposed, he assumed an air of sincerity. He analyzed the evidence with great skill, and commented on it with consummate coldness. He kept his own feelings altogether in the background; he reasoned for Lord Wellesley; and in the course of his speech he took care to neutralize the effects of his colleague's insidious compliments on his zeal and co-operation.

Far different was Mr. Plunkett's display; it was a magnificent specimen of forensic eloquence, the finest perhaps he ever delivered. His, too, was a delicate task, but arising from very different causes; his soul was set on a verdict, for he desperately hated Orangeism, a feeling which was amply reciprocated; for, like the object of Priam's animosity, they would 'devour him raw without salt.' He knew well that the jury was compounded of the most unfavourable materials for justice, and he sought to flatter their pride as Protestants, by identifying their principles with those of William the Third and the Revolution. In all that has been written of that monarch there is nothing which approximates in grandeur to the description of his personal character, his policy, and the difficulties he had to encounter, drawn by the Attorney-general. Perhaps the colouring is excessive, but the occasion required some sacrifice to real truth in order to produce the desired effect.

'There is not, my lords, perhaps to be found in the annals of history a character more truly great than that of William the Third. Perhaps no person has ever appeared in the theatre of the world who has conferred more essential and more lasting benefits on mankind: on these countries, certainly none. When I look at the abstract merits of his character, I contemplate them with admiration and reverence. Lord of a petty principality, destitute of all resources but those with which nature had endowed him, regarded with jealousy and envy by those whose battles he fought, thwarted in all his counsels, embarrassed in all his movements, deserted in his most critical enterprises, he continued to mould all these discordant materials, to govern all these warring interests, and merely by the force of his genius, the ascendency of his integrity, and the immoveable firmness and constancy of his nature, to combine them in an indissoluble alliance against the schemes of despotism, and the universal dominion of the most powerful monarch of Europe, seconded by the ablest generals, at the head of the bravest and best disciplined armies in the world, and wielding without check or control the unlimited resources of his empire. He was not a consummate general. Military men will point out his errors; in that respect fortune did not favour him, save by throwing the lustre of adversity over all his virtues. He sustained defeat after defeat, but always rose, *adversâ rerum immersabilis undâ*. Looking merely at his shining qualities and achievements, I admire him as I do a Scipio, a Regulus, a Fabius—a model of tranquil courage, undeviating probity, and armed with a resoluteness and constancy in the cause of truth and freedom, which rendered him superior to the accidents which control the fate of ordinary men. But this is not all—I feel that to him, under God, I am at this moment indebted for the rights I enjoy as a subject of these free countries—to him I owe the blessings of a civil and religious liberty, and I venerate his memory with a fervour of devotion suited to his illustrious qualities and his godlike acts.'

The following piece of exquisite adulation must have been very grateful to the royal ears for which it was intended. The artifice of the construction is only equalled by the eloquence.

'In the history of royal lives there seldom has occurred an instance affording a more gratifying subject for the historian to dwell on than the royal visit to Ireland. The statement of splendid victories, the development of profound schemes of policy, the application of able counsels, and of powerful resources, the defence of the liberties of the world, all these are the subjects of historic detail, and may be the fair subjects of political controversy. But here, by the mere impulse of his own feelings, the heartiness of his nature, a moment was created, in which, without calling on any of the common-places of royalty, without the aid of fear, or force, or flattery, without arms, or power, or patronage, by the mere indulgence of his kind and generous nature, he gained to himself the most exalted privileges which a human being can exercise, that of bestowing happiness, and sharing it with millions of his fellow-creatures. The promptness with which the moment was seized—the gracious and condescending manner by which it was improved—the thousand and ten thousand blessings which are to be derived from it, all these may be subjects of just applause and of sober criticism. But here the true value of the act is its simplicity. To enter into the hearts and become master of the enthusiastic affections of an entire people, merely by showing himself the friend and father of them all, was a felicity to him and them unparalleled in the eventful history of this nation. It was worthy the successor of the great monarch whose talents and virtues he emulated, and whose memory he rescued from the dis-

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graceful orgies by which it had been tarnished. Equal in the motive and the feeling, happier in this, that the hard fortune of William the Third compelled him to visit this country as a conqueror, but it was reserved for the peculiar felicity of George the Fourth that he was the first British king who ever placed a friendly step on the Irish soil.'

We will give one more passage from this splendid oration. The advocate having done all in his power to flatter the loyalty of the impanelled partisans whom he addressed, and to distinguish their principles from those of the accused, bears down, with all the force of angry and indignant eloquence, on the disloyal conduct of the offenders. After having painted in the most glowing colours the atrocity of the act, he proceeds to say—

'But, my lords, daring and unexampled as is the crime, I hesitate not to say that the enormity of the deed is lost in the boldness of the motives. I fairly tell you I come not here on the part of the Marquis of Wellesley to ask for personal redress, or even to call for public justice, so far as he is personally concerned; not even on the part of the Lord Lieutenant of Ireland to seek atonement for the outrage committed against the King's representative, but on behalf of the country and its laws, on behalf of its hopes of peace and safety, to claim your aid, backed by all the authority of opinion, in putting down a desperate and insolent attempt to overawe the King's government in Ireland, and to compel his representative, by the arm of personal violence, and by the demonstration of a force above the law, to change the measures of his government. I call on you to put down the base conspiracy of a contemptible gang who have associated to put down the laws, and to overbear the King's representative because he has presumed to execute the King's commands. I think I know the feelings of the illustrious personage against whom this villany has been directed. With respect to his own personal safety, much as it has been endangered, the attack only served to arouse his gallant mettle; indignant as he must have felt to be "hawked at by such mousing owls" as these, their base attempt excited no terror, left no resentment. That there should have been in this land persons capable of conceiving and hands capable of executing such an outrage against their countryman must have excited sensations of regret and pain, but in this respect the national character has been redeemed by the universal expression of indignation which has issued from the hearts of the Irish people.'

The issue of this memorable trial is well known; the principles of the Ascendency triumphed for a season, but the Marquis of Wellesley did not change his 'Morningtone,' and the foundation of a system was laid which has continued to operate up to the present day. The prosecution of Mr. O'Connell for the Bolivar speech; as it was called, was one of the most unpopular acts of Mr. Plunkett, and the ignoring of the bills was to him a deep source of mortification. He should have made some allowance for language spoken in a high state of exasperation, when the Catholic Association was about to be suppressed, but on the principle of equal justice he considered that Catholic and Protestant, Daniel O'Connell and Sheriff Thorpe, should be treated alike. The proofs of 'damned treason' were not, however, forthcoming; and more in hatred of the Attorney-general than love for O'Connell, the jury found, 'We are not informed.' It is unnecessary to dwell on the career of Lord Plunkett since that period. When Canning came into power he obtained the chief seat in the Common Pleas, from which he was soon after promoted to the high office of Chancellor. How long he may continue to hold the seals, is at present a much-agitated question. Every day we hear of the probable advent of Sir John Campbell on our shores, but Lord Plunkett still presides, and shows no inclination to surrender his authority. In one event he may be induced to spend the remainder of his honoured years in the tranquil shades of Old Connaught, if his old friend Lord Manners, or any of the ex-chancellors, should make room for him on the retired list.

Ireland produced many great advocates, but taking advocacy in its most comprehensive sense, the greatest of all unquestionably was Lord Plunkett. Some were more distinguished as mere lawyers, as the citers of authorities and cases in point; some were better versed in the routine practice of the courts, some to wink at juries with greater effect, but he surpassed all in the strong and sterling qualities that constitute a man of all work. That he had not browsed to any considerable extent in the rank marshes of the law, or refreshed his mind with cheering draughts of Norman French or black letter, is very apparent, for at the present day, unless on compulsion, he rarely refers to authority, trusting rather to general principles of equity than frittering away justice in deciding technical distinctions between shadows. He was superior to all in intellectual depth, though inferior to many in book lore. When a case was laid before him, he saw, as it were instinctively, the main question to be discussed, and by a similar instinctive process, the great and leading principles which were applicable to its investigation. Having duly arranged them in his mind, marshalling them in the array of an army preparing to do battle,—van, wings, centre and reserve,—mutually supporting and assisting each other, he calmly waited the onset of his adversary. That being successfully repelled, he now showed his whole force, and bore down on the key of his adversary's position. He was always prepared, and always prompt to attack or repel with vigour; for the resources of his mind were

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of so vast a nature as to supply him on the most unexpected emergencies. When he was in the right, his reasoning was irresistible; he leavened the whole argument with a weighty, manly logic, which penetrated the mass of details, and pressed them forward in a compact body to reach the conclusions he required. When he was in the wrong, his powers of sophistry were so great as to leave the court betimes in a dismal state of perplexity, and to astonish the bar by his logical subtlety, and the extraordinary readiness with which he could take advantage of the least weakness in an adversary's argument. No person could discover what part was studied and what thrown off in the heat of discussion, for the most involved processes of thought were exhibited by him on principles and cases which were now broached for the first time, and could not be anticipated. Few are gifted with this first and most valuable quality of advocacy. In most advocates the transition is so marked that the least critical taste can discover the line of demarcation which separates prepared reasoning from the suggestions of the moment. In him the change was wholly imperceptible. Mr. Sheil very felicitously describes the triumphs of his understanding as an equity lawyer. 'I look on Mr. Plunkett's going through a long and important argument in the Court of Chancery to be a most extraordinary exhibition of human intellect. For hours he will go on with increased rapidity, arguing, defining, illustrating, separating intricate facts, laying down subtle distinctions, prostrating an objection here, pouncing upon a fallacy there, then retracing his steps, and restating, in some original point of view, his general proposition, then flying off again to the outskirts of the question, and dealing his desultory blows with merciless iteration, wherever an inch of ground remains to be cleared. And during the whole of this, not only does his vigour not flag for a single moment, but his mind does not even pause for a single second for a topic, an idea, or an impression. This velocity of creation, arrangement, and delivery, is quite astonishing; and what adds to your wonder is, that it seems to be achieved without an effort. Mass after mass of argument is thrown off, conveyed in phraseology, vigorous, appropriate, and luminous, while the speaker, as if the minister and organ of some hidden power that saves him the cost of laborious exertion, appears solely anxious to impress on others his own reliance on the force of what seems to come unsought. This singular command over his great powers, coupled with his imposing exterior and masculine intonations, gives extraordinary weight to all he says. From his unsuspected earnestness of tone and manner, you would often imagine that his zeal for his client was only secondary to a deeper anxiety that the court should not violate the uniformity of its decisions by establishing a precedent fraught with anomaly and danger, while the authoritative ease and perspicuity with which he states and illustrates his opinions, give him the air, as it were, of some high legal functionary appearing on behalf of the public, not so much to debate the question before the court, as to testify the law that should decide it.' There was one fault in the reasoning of Mr. Plunkett, arising from the fulness of that quality which he had in common with the great lawyer of Rome,—'Non ut causam, sed ut testimonium dicere putares,'—which was, that he seemed to be less the advocate than the witness. His earnestness sometimes led him to substitute impressions for conclusions, to state as indisputable and irrefragable what all but himself perceived to be based on no solid foundation. This arose from the versatility of his mind, and the variety of his resources; for, before one topic was fully exhausted, he struck into a new argument, which the most trifling remark of an opponent was sufficient to supply. Had he confined himself to the main points, and sifted them through all their bearings, he could not have fallen into this error; but his intellectual abundance was so vast, that he cared not to seize on the most minute distinction, and lavish on it a portion of that power which, if confined to the material questions, would have been overwhelming. Burke had a similar fault, but his was the exuberance of multifarious learning and a discursive fancy—Plunkett's of superfluous logic and too rapid argument. Like him, too, he sometimes distracted by the velocity of his movements, and the variety of his missiles; he created a panic as if he had made a practicable breach, but after the confusion had subsided, and the smoke had cleared away, it was discovered that the fortress remained still untouched.

As an orator, he ranked in the very highest class. The eloquence which has long passed with our neighbours as peculiarly our own, has the same relation to legitimate Irish oratory as a transparency bears to a painting. There are no delicate touches, no hues imperceptibly fading into each other—the whole is lit up with one universal glare of swollen diction and exaggerated sentiment—outlines and tints are forgotten in the common blaze which illuminates all. The flowers and fruits, it is said, of the intellect abound; but it is the profusion, not of a well-ordered garden, but an uncultivated jungle—unprofitable from its very plenty, rank from its very fragrance. Much of this we do not deny, but it applies with as much force to English as to Irish speakers. There is not in Ireland, and never has been, any school of which these faults are characteristic; on the contrary, our real eloquence was marked with as much sobriety, order, and practical power, as that of any other people. In a British parliament, to which everything savouring of Irish oratory was distasteful, Mr. Plunkett nobly supported the national character by his superiority over the most eloquent men of the day. The House of Commons was then a very trying assembly to an Irishman. Nothing good could come out of Galilee. Depreciat-

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ing judgments were passed on our most distinguished orators;—Flood was a miserable failure—Grattan's manner was ridiculed as that of a harlequin—Curran was extravagantly luxuriant. It remained for Mr. Plunkett to master all these obstinate prejudices, and silence all objections by the commanding grandeur of his powers. What astonished the House of Commons beyond all measure, was how his argumentative power could be sustained. Its operation, observed a contemporary, never for a moment ceases, but sweeps on without intermission from the commencement to the close. Profound reasoning is the breath of his mental existence, or rather the vital stream, into which all his other qualities as a speaker resolve themselves. And in all this there is no appearance of art or effort; the most perplexed and involved processes of reasoning are thrown off with the same degree of ease that others do the language of colloquial conversation.

He was eminent for his great clearness and compactness, for the dignified simplicity of his style and manner, and the general elevation of his views, and that, too, at a time remarkable for first-rate minds. His language was full of nerve and energy; it had the 'plus lacertorum, minus carnis'—the thew and sinew of eloquence, with few of its rhetorical encumbrances. It had freedom, force, and facility; sometimes it was familiar, but that rather increased than diminished the effect. He was never oppressed with the weight of his matter, massive as that was. Marching forth to the field in that ponderous armour, he still moved with the agility of one who bears but a scrip and sling—now balancing the weighty spear of argumentation, and now scattering around him the galling arrows of irony and sarcasm. His dexterity was never impeded by his strength, nor was his strength impeded by the velocity of his movements, which were directed in succession to every view of the subject. All secondary ornaments he scrupulously rejected, or at least never sought for them. Those foreign lights which are brought forward for the purpose of shining and display, rather than naturally springing from the matter in discussion, were abandoned for the more solid parts of advocacy, which, though less captivating and popular, are more sure to facilitate conviction. When he did indulge in figures of speech, which was very rare, they never interfered with the substantial object, but were rather fused into and incorporated with it, than adventitious beauties that fascinated the ear while they obscured the sense, and interrupted his march to the destined end. Let us take the following description of the Church:—

'Religion is degraded when it is brandished as a political weapon, and there is no medium in the use of it. Either it is justified by holy zeal and fervent piety, or the appeal to it becomes liable to the most suspicious imputation. I consider the safety of the State as essentially interwoven with the integrity of the Establishment. The Established Religion is the child of freedom. The Reformation grew out of the free spirit of bold investigation; in its turn it repaid the obligation with more than filial gratitude, and contributed with all its force to raise the fabric of our liberties. The Church need not be apprehensive. It is a plant of the growth of three hundred years. It has struck its roots into the centre of the State, and nothing but a political earthquake can overturn it. While the State is safe, it must be so; but let it not be forgotten, that if the State is endangered, it cannot be secure. The Church is protected by the purity of its doctrines and its discipline; the learning and piety of its ministers; the exemplary discharge of every Christian duty; the dignity of its hierarchy; the extent and lustre of its possessions; and the reverence of the public for its ancient and unquestioned rights. If anything could endanger its safety, it would be the conduct of intemperate and officious men, who would erect the Church into a political arbiter, to prescribe rules of imperial policy to the throne and the legislature.'

If this be compared with Burke's famous panegyric, we think every lover of sound taste will consider it less florid and ambitious, and far more pure and correct, both in conception and language. But there were occasions when his severity of style relaxed, and he was seduced by a metaphor. Once commenting on the rule of law which raises a presumption that, after a long and undisturbed possession, the title was originally a good one where the conveyance had been lost under which the estate passed, and so could not be produced, he said, 'Time is the great destroyer of evidence, but he is also the great protector of titles. He comes with a scythe in one hand to mow down the muniments of our possession, while he holds an hour-glass in the other, from which he incessantly metes out the portions of duration that are to render the muniments no longer necessary.' Lord Brougham, in his speech on legal reform, noticed the apposite beauty of this metaphorical illustration. This deflection from the chaste and severe is not often found in Mr. Plunkett. He preferred rather to dive than to soar—to search for profound arguments than brilliant images—for the sterling gold than the superficial glitter. He did not devote himself to dazzle, to study fine words as a substitute for things, to string together rhetorical flowers to delight for a moment and be forgotten.

Few ever possessed a sounder understanding, or were so seldom obstructed in the use of it by headlong enthusiasm on the one side, or a stubborn love of authority on the other. He studied perspicuity and simplicity, and always aimed at making an impression more by the surpassing force and clearness than the long and learned elaborateness of his reasoning. Without any ostentation of a more than ordinary reflection,

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the profoundest contempt for all kinds of declamatory beauty, with little of the tender and pathetic, it is extraordinary that he should have exhibited one of the finest models of modern oratory. But this surprise will vanish when we contemplate his other merits. We have heard a good judge say that he rarely persuaded, because he had no passion. In the usual acceptation of the word, which is only another name for precipitancy, he was not passionate, for he was too cool and practical to be led away by what passes for the unrestrained enthusiasm of genius. He had passions, but, like well-trained troops, they were impetuous by rule, and in their boldest flights never forgot the discipline to which they had been accustomed. When he began to speak, a common observer would have thought him awkward, a trait which was also peculiar to Grattan; but after a short time he was changed into another being. Like a chariot-wheel that takes fire by the rapidity of its motion, he was borne along, forgetful of himself and of everything around him, and thinking only of the subject. But, amidst all this whirl and confusion, his judgment never forsook him; the noble dignity of a great mind was still there. He was impassioned, but never precipitate or imprudent. There was about him a native grandeur which excited the admiration even of his enemies; and, as a mind akin to his own once observed, 'Every man must abandon the hope of resembling him in the flow of his masterly elocution, in the quickness and multiplicity of his conceptions, in the unartificial and diversified structure of his diction, in the alertness of his escapes from objections which almost seemed insuperable, in the fresh interest he infused into topics which seemed to be exhausted, and in the unexpected turn he gave to parliamentary conflicts which had already exercised the prowess of veteran combatants.' At the bar, but particularly on jury trials, he and the Chief Justice were almost always opposed, and so was their eloquence. The Chief's was the very reverse of the Chancellor's. The style of the former had in it all that delight which is analogous to gracefulness in motion, to melody in a series of sounds, or to beauty in the most beautiful of all objects—the human form. He was the most perfect specimen of that fullness in oratory from which nothing could be taken without destroying its symmetry, and of which those who assist their mental operations by material helps will have the best idea by taking in their hand a sample of the finest grain. Unlike his rival, he was rich in the figures of the old rhetoricians; but his tropes and metaphors were gentle, and, like little graceful knolls in a fine champaign, served to relieve the driest details. Handling almost every branch of forensic eloquence, he brought into each such a felicity of performance, that, as Johnson said of Goldsmith, he always seemed to do best that which he was doing. We have elsewhere remarked on the qualities of the Chief Justice, so that it is unnecessary to extend our observations. He and Lord Plunkett are the two most accomplished men that ever sat on the Irish bench. They started in life together; their hostility to the Union made both equally conspicuous; throughout the vicissitudes of life they have maintained a strict and inviolable attachment, with which nothing has ever been supposed to interfere; and one never speaks of the other but with reverence for his genius and powers.

It remains to say a few words of Lord Plunkett as a public man. Impartiality, the greatest of all virtues in a public writer, we have endeavoured to bring to the consideration of his lordship's character. If all political enemies were generous, or even just, and all political friends reasonable, our task might be less difficult, and the cotemporary who could rise above transient animosities, and anticipate the tone of history, might gain some credit from both. Ours, we fear, must be a less magnanimous reception. The irritable friends of his own party will at once ascribe such candour to the imperfect admissions of a partial witness. But, with all this discouragement, we shall not be deterred from fearlessly stating our opinions. Lord Plunkett exhibited a rare skill in playing that varied game of skill and hazard, the life of a public man. He had not, we fear, sufficient elevation of sentiment to merit the name of a very virtuous man, such as Romilly was. He did not betray or oppress his country; on the contrary, he rendered her many and important services; but he risked little for her. Nothing, we believe, could ever induce him to support arbitrary or despotic measures; but he was most careful never to give offence by strenuously opposing them. We now speak of his general conduct, for we remember with lively gratitude his zeal and courage on the Catholic question. He never put himself prominently forward before the public eye, except at conjunctures when he was sure to gain, and could not possibly lose. By judiciously availing himself of those rare moments, he established for himself a high character for patriotism. When the crisis was past, he never risked the reputation he had won. The falling off of a prudent man from such unprofitable virtues as patriotism is too common an occurrence to deserve much notice, or justify much reprobation; but, on the other hand, the adherence of men through the various chances of life to the convictions of their earlier years deserves some praise, when a lax political morality seemed to be the golden rule of human conduct. With the great mass of mankind, the test of integrity in a public man is consistency. The test may be defective, but it is perhaps the best that any except a very acute or very near observer is capable of applying, and, on the whole, approximates to correctness. If these principles be applied to Lord Plunkett, the result must be in his favour. He undoubtedly was consistent, and at a time, too, when inconsistency had not only ceased

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to be a disgrace, but assumed the shape of a necessity, and men were no more taunted with it than being black at Timbuctoo. He steadily adhered to the Whig party when their fortunes were low, and there was no hope of change; and though he might have been more energetic, and taken a more active part in the great questions which they agitated from time to time to advance public liberty, yet he was not the less a firm and devoted Whig. Once did he deviate from his party, and that was on the Manchester riots, when he adopted the views and opinions of Lord Grenville, who ever seemed to him the perfection of political wisdom. We now take our leave of Lord Plunkett. His name will fill an ample page in Irish history, and his fame as an orator will stand high in the records of British eloquence. Ireland has just reason to be proud of him.

THE EXILE'S DEPARTURE.

She shook her idle canvass free,
And stretch'd it to the wind,
For sunrise lit the emerald sea,
And a fresh breeze sang behind.

Her captain scann'd the windward sky,
His mates her slanting sail,
The seamen watch'd the waves go by;
What cheer? Grew dim no seaman's eye,
No hardy cheek grew pale.

Yet one stood near, whose eye would brook
Nor sky, nor sail, nor wave,
And ever shoreward turn'd his look,
The yearning look he gave.

A pale, health-seeking exile, he
From all he loved has flown;
For long, long moons his rest must be
Beneath a kinder zone.

No wonder if the mist of grief
Before his eyes be shed,
If hope's warm fire, a season brief,
Within his heart be dead.

Thou leavest tearful faces, friend!
Fair faces dimm'd with tears,
And mournful manly hearts shall bend,
Where no such pearl appears.

God yield ye helpful winds, thou ship!
If prayers will aid thy speed;
And may thy prow full swiftly dip,
Nor rock nor shoal impede.

May health-inspiring spirits bring
Sweet incense round thy track,
That lips may smile and glad hearts sing,
To greet the wanderer back!

W. T.

MEMOIRS OF AN ITALIAN EXILE.*

BY ELI BLACKGOWN, D.D.

CHAPTER X.

The Guard-room.

'Diverse lingue, orribili favelle,
Parole di dolore, accenti d'ira
Voci alte e fioche e suon di man con elle.'

Fond as I have always been of a night ramble, I found the air of the streets exhilarating and cooling. It was past twelve o'clock, and the city of Parma lay as noiseless and tranquil as if the storms of revolutionary passions had never raged in its bosom. No living being was stirring about, and the dead stillness of the hour was only interrupted by the heavy tolling of the midnight bell from the Minster belfry, to which the chorus of the minor steeples responded in a monotonous and lingering chime around.

Yet, though 'the very houses seemed asleep,' something there was to remind me of the warlike attitude that the enfranchised town had assumed. The sentinels, numerous even under the ancient *régime*, when, as under every other despotic government, the hated apparatus of armed force meets you wherever you turn, were now redoubled at every post. The young militiamen, who had been entrusted with the care of public tranquillity, seemed not a little proud of their functions, and strove to make up for their want of a gilt-buttoned jacket by the stately military step with which they strutted to and fro, by the fierce clash with which they tossed their muskets on their shoulders as the homeward-bound peaceable citizen drew near, and by the lusty voice with which they thundered forth their blustering 'Chi va là?'

'Italia e libertà!' I shouted back with equal firmness, for such, I had been made to understand, was the war-cry, without which it would hardly have been safe to venture out of doors. And after having been thus challenged perhaps fifty times, and nearly as many been ordered in a blunt and growling accent, by those amateur *factionnaires*, to cross over the way, and not come near the sentinel; after having met, and been stopped, and reconnoitred by half-a-dozen patrols—petty inconveniences of newly-established liberty—I arrived without any other serious accident at the Town Hall.

Four glaring flambeaux lighted the entrance of that old Farnesian building, by the aid of which I was recognized by the sentinels, and enabled to gain a ready admittance. My first appearance on the threshold of the guard-room did not fail, as I expected, to create a certain sensation. A hundred perhaps of my juvenile acquaintance, and many more utter strangers, crowded around me; and what with the heat of the room, and the warmth of their welcome, and the eagerness of their embraces, I was well-nigh stifled on the spot. But the rage of that first greeting

* Continued from p. 169.

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being over in good time, I was helped to a lofty seat at the top of a long oaken table at which they were reclining, and allowed to take a wide, rapid survey of the party.

It was as strange and motley a group of odd countenances as it ever fell to my lot to behold.

Through the rolling clouds of a steaming atmosphere I descried, one by one, the faces of some of my college friends and playfellows. Their features were still the same; yet there was something so bold, so glaring, so ludicrously stern and savage in their looks, that I was at a loss to conceive how the interval of two short months could have operated so strange a metamorphosis. The dreaming, romantic poet, the sedate, laborious bookworm, the perfumed dandy, the reckless voluptuary—in fact, all those peculiar traits that develope themselves in that hotbed of the human character, the school—had now merged into one universal mould—they were all, or would be, soldiers.

The coats buttoned up to the chin, the total disappearance of shirt-collars, the tricolour scarfs, the broad-swords, pistols, and poniards with which, even among the joys of that friendly meeting, their childish fondness did not permit them to dispense, the cigar and the punch-bowl, under the influence of which some of the uninitiated were to be seen fainting and sickening, and above all, the large crops of moustaches, whiskers, and beards—beards of every colour, shape, and description—a reaction against the mean jealousy of the late governments, who had declared war against those useless, perhaps, but still harmless and natural appendages of a manly countenance, alarmed by the romantic republican appellations by which some of those fashions were ushered into the world, as emblems of national associations—everything, in short, about their look, garb, gesture, and mien, contributed to give my old schoolfellows a swaggering air, mighty fine, no doubt, and admirably fitting the warlike times we had so prosperously entered into, but which struck me, at the first glance, as supremely absurd.

But mingled with the well-known faces of my comrades there were others, either totally new, or ominously familiar to me; men whose addresses I would, only a few weeks before, have resented as a mortal affront, whose contact I would have shunned as contagion, and whom I now saw seated or standing side by side with the best of my friends, throwing their arms round each other's neck, and pledging each other's health in large bumpers, with a sort of bacchanalian intimacy.

'Huzza for republican equality!' thought I. I had yet to learn that, indifferent as those persons' reputation might have been before the thirteenth of February, they had redeemed their character either by rare exploits during the tumults of that memorable day, or by the extraordinary zeal which they had since evinced in the cause of the revolution, or otherwise owed their popularity to some act of flagrant injustice, by which they were held out as martyrs and victims of the ancient government, and acquired sacred titles to their countrymen's sympathy and gratitude.

In any, even in the best regulated communities, there is always a set of men which public economists have designated under the rather vague appellation of surplus population. In every country that has been settled more than one hundred years, land is failing the inhabitants. Domestic and foreign quarrels, plagues, and famines, though more busy than ever, appear inefficient and slow. The stubborn human race, that 'durum humanum genus,' eludes all agents of destruction. The meanest wretch clings to the roof of his fathers, claims his right to the soil, and hangs on society. He looks upon himself as the victim of the injustice of fortune. He ascribes his failures to a general conspiracy of the whole community against him. Once fallen, he never hopes, never strives to recover. He curses the hard times in which he was born; he sinks into dejection and dissipation, waiting for sudden vicissitudes to come to his rescue; he expects the earth to be stricken out of its path for his sake. Placing thus his expectations in public changes and revolutions, no wonder if he does his best to hasten them. The number of individuals of this description is considerable in Europe; more so in all countries which, deprived of colonial commerce, obtain no relief from a system of periodical emigration. They are ruined noblemen, half-pay officers, bankrupt merchants, and other men of all descriptions, whose existence is a problem—a meddling, fretting, murmuring race, great haranguers, great alarmists, ominous prophets, seizing upon any pretext, real or apparent, of discontent, stirring, poking, and blowing, until they have kindled a few sparks into a general conflagration.

The sight of these individuals now converted into a class—into an active, numerous, powerful class, amazed me. I saw at one glance, that the day had come when brute force and reckless daring were to assume at least a temporary ascendency over all moral and intellectual advantage; that a revolution, however unimportant, has always the effect of bringing society back to its primitive level, of substituting natural for artificial distinctions, of throwing every individual into the scale, without any chance of outweighing his fellow-beings but by personal qualifications.

I soon consoled myself by the thought that such an anomalous state of things could not endure; that real valour can never be found unaccompanied by moral worth: that the first hour of danger would scare those vile braggarts from their nobler associates. In the meanwhile I mentally thanked my good father for the care he had taken of my physical education, for the field-sports and manly exercises in which my youth was spent, and in consequence of which I could fairly consider myself a match for any man at any trial of strength or dexterity.

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Every man being thus valued in proportion to his fitness for military life, the soldiers of Maria Louisa's ex-regiments had become the heroes of the day. There they were to be seen mingled with our guests, rather as messmates than waiters at the table.

The volunteers of the national guard and the few remaining companies of what had been the ducal army were ordered to perform duty together. A *bourgeois* and soldier invariably mounted guard side by side, and the *corps-de-garde* was promiscuously tenanted by the military of both descriptions.

From the first moment that surprise or irresoluteness had given the citizen so easy and cheap a victory over the soldier, it had become the fondest object of scheming minds to win the scattered remnant of those ducal forces over to the national cause, which their inactivity, not to say open defection, had so powerfully aided. The ardent patriots who had laid hold of the grenadiers' swords and muskets in the first heat of conflict, had been easily induced to return them to those same men who, from being the tyrant's satellites, had now become their country's defenders, and our young men were strongly recommended to associate, or, according to the republican phrase, to *fraternize* with them.

The hope and, in fact, the necessity of soon going to war with Austria, and the universally felt insufficiency of mere personal valour against disciplined troops, caused our politicians to set on the military skill of those few mercenaries a value which they had never before had in their eyes. These regulars were to be the first legion, the vanguard of the national army, and our main chance of success wholly depended on the activity and zeal with which every man should contrive to identify himself with the soldier.

From daybreak to sunset the *place d'arms* at the citadel swarmed with young students enlisted in the moveable column of the national guard who had forsaken their lecture and dissecting-rooms for the caserne, and were forgetting their Greek and Latin in their eagerness to be initiated in all the mysteries of the *pas ordinaire* and the *charge en-douze-tems*. After dusk, pupils and teachers met in the guard-rooms at the town-hall, at the palace, at the town-gates, wherever in fact the veterans and their new comrades sat up for their country's weal, or otherwise repaired to the eating-houses and *messed* together. By such convivial offerings the vanquished were to be reconciled to their victors. By such genial bribes our raw recruits paid for their warlike apprenticeship.

The chairman (Capo di Tavola) of the fraternization banquet I had been rather unexpectedly ushered into, was no less important a personage than the head-sergeant of the drill, Sergeant Spavaldo himself—a man, as they said, 'who had seen fire,' and had made mincemeat of Austrian flesh in many encounters.

He was a middle-sized, but thick-set, square-built, broad-shouldered, gladiator-looking personage, with a grim scowling visage, and such a pair of black moustaches as might have scared a tribe of red Indians from the depth of their thickets. His head was bare and bald, and the swollen veins started on his forehead. He flourished his clenched fist as he spoke; he drank deep and swore awfully, and at every new oath he uttered—the oaths were generally in French, and many have been omitted in this translation as useless expletives—he let his red hand fall on the table with an energy that set every tumbler a-ringing merrily around.

'Well, youngster,' he began, addressing me; 'well, youngster, here's to your health, and all the brave lads from Compiano.'

'Long live the prisoners of Compiano,' cried several voices around. '*Viva l' Italia!*' '*Viva l' Independenza Italiana!*' *Viva la guardia nazionale!*' were the most audible sounds in the midst of the din of confused cries to which that first compliment paid to the rescued prisoners had given rise.

'Soh!' roared the sergeant, 'that old fox, Captain Ridolfi, would not let you outwithout a written order, eh? I swear to G—d, a d—d capital fellow the old captain! *Sacrement! la discipline avant tout*, as we used to say in the *Cinquième*. Heard of the *Cinquième*, have you not? Why, man, it was the pet of Napoleon, and he gave orders that we should wear on our *shakos* "UN CONTRE CINQ!"'

'Come, boys,' cried one of the toast-masters, 'a bumper to the brave veterans of the Cinquième!'

The veteran bowed thankfully. 'Ay, I recollect Captain Ridolfi was in the Real Veliti. A set of rum fellows the Real Veliti, I warrant you. Well, youngster, I am glad he let you out at last, anyhow. He has spared us a vast deal of trouble. We were all getting up *en masse*, and a d—d bad road it is, I am told, to Compiano.'

'I say, Spavaldo,' suggested a pale, slim, red-eyed law-student, a young *blasé* in all manner of depravity, whom his father had been obliged to shut up for several months in a house of correction for misdemeanour and filial rebellion. He was one of those bilious temperaments Cæsar stood so particularly in dread of. He had no weapons about him but his stiletto, which he held ostentatiously drawn on the table. 'I say, had we not better start up, *en masse*, as you say, and a capital road we would have too, I promise you, all the way, and march to Placentia?'

'Ay, ay, De Ferrari,' bawled out Count Berardi from the other end of the table. The count was one of the members of that fraternity of desperate characters for whom the revolution could not fail to be a blessing on many accounts. He was known as a bold, desperate spirit, but also one of those evil geniuses whom nothing short of downright anarchy could satisfy. 'Ay, ay, and

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knock that confounded renegade, your father, on the head by the way.'

'With all my heart and soul,' replied De Ferrari, with the smile of a hyena: 'and hark ye, my fine fellow, if you determine upon hanging him for an example, by Heaven I am the man to take the bowstring to him.'

I shuddered. 'What! does your father side with our enemies!' I ventured to inquire.

'Does he!' retorted that dutiful son. 'Why, where do you think you could find us, but in opposite ranks? He has gathered around him at Fiorenzola some fifty or sixty between gendarmes and excisemen, and is now enlisting brigands to attempt a counter-revolution.'

'Death to the traitor!' vociferated the chorus.

'Down with the brigands! down with Maria Louisa! down with the Austrian harlot! To Vienna with her parrots and monkeys! To Vienna with her minions and bastards!'

I was at a loss to comprehend what new cause of offence the vanquished sovereign could have afforded to her rebellious subjects, who had in fact never evinced any personal ill-will against her, and had, even in their worst moments, looked upon her with no bitterer feelings than unmitigated contempt. I was soon informed that the exiled Duchess, after having parted with her enfranchised people at the Po, had taken a round through the Cremonese territory, and suddenly re-appeared at Placentia, under shelter of the Austrian garrison, whence her emissaries attempted what the thin law-student dignified with the name of a counter-revolution.

'The traitor!' cried out Count Berardi, whose shrill sour voice was heard above the full chorus of the tumultuous assembly. 'What traitor?' Who or where is the traitor? and how many are the traitors? Down with Fuseli! I say, down with the commander of the national guard! Down with the provisional government. They all but sell us body and soul to the Austrian wretch whom we have just driven from our walls.'

The whole company looked blank for a moment. There were present not a few that belonged to what was called the moderate party, men who were anxious to imitate the meekness and forbearance of the French heroes of *Juillet*, to preserve in its purity that bloodless revolution which had commenced under such peaceful auspices, and who considered the *juste-milieu* line of policy adopted by government as the only one likely to save the country in the difficult circumstances in which the insurgents had so rashly placed themselves.

One of them, in whom I easily recognized my old acquaintance Signor Brandi the civil engineer, to whom some of my readers may, perhaps, remember to have been introduced) being seated near the titled demagogue, took hold of his left arm with a look both of reproof and deprecation, as if saying 'for shame!'

'I say, a set of cowardly traitors,' repeated the infuriated count. 'Nay, do not pull my sleeve, Brandi, and let these deluded fools hear the truth once at least in their lives. Who is afraid? Have I not spoken my mind as freely when all of you, wretches, trembled to whisper? Think you I will be silent now, in what you call your day of liberty? a gang of traitors, I tell you—and if you would only listen to me, if you would only behave like men for an hour, we could do no better than run to the palace, and kick those trembling dotards down stairs.'

'Ay' cried a voice from behind the crowd, 'and create you, count, emperor or dictator in their stead.'

'I tell you, count—' remonstrated Signor Brandi.

'D—n the count,' retorted the incorrigible count, who, as a stanch republican, hated his beggarly title.

'Well then, I tell you, Berardi,' continued Brandi, not at all ruffled by his adversary's asperity, 'I tell you that if we go on this way pulling to the right and left, all will soon go to the devil. Our provisional government—you call them cowards and traitors, but you do not mean, of course——'

'By Heaven but I do, though.'

'Allow me. No, you mean not what you say. Some of them are your personal friends, and you know them as well as I do. They are all honest, well-meaning patriots—of course they enter not into your views. They were not, like you, the authors of the revolution.' (This was said somewhat ironically, because the count was not a little vain of the title of hero of the 13th of February). 'Had it been in their power, they would rather have stayed it for a month or two, for a few weeks perhaps, till it was maturely prepared. The revolution, you have made it—I mean you and a few young enthusiasts who listened rather to your ardour than to the dictates of prudence. But once the step being taken—and a daring glorious deed I will allow you it was—you felt that you had been led too far by your generous impulse, and you trusted your own work to the conduct of aged men, whose sounder judgment might counteract what there was of rash and inconsiderate in your premature attempt.'

'Long live our provisional government!' cried a few voices.

'I say, down with them and all their supporters,' retorted the count with passion. 'Look you, Brandi, I am none of your advocates. I speak plainly and uncouthly. I am *ugly and sincere*, as our old women say. I am a man of deeds, not of words, and that, I trust, you will find out ere long. This, however, I tell you, that you can't humbug me with your fine phrases, as easily as you do this flock of tame geese, that sit here crowing and cackling around you. Well! what does all you have said amount to, but simply this? that *we* have made a revolution, and *you* will unmake it.'

'Down with the brigands!' shouted the count's partisans. 'Down with the *moderates*.'

'Huzza for Count Berardi,' cried the ca-

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chetic law-student. 'Huzza for the children of the revolution.'

'He was the first to appear on the square with a cockade on his hat. He was hated at court like the plague.'

'He has been a *sorvegliato* these last two years,' said many voices, enumerating the count's titles to the public gratitude, after the fashion of ancient heralds when they ushered a strange knight into the lists.

'Come, my friends,' cried the popular count, 'we have been bamboozled long enough by these *doctrinaires*. Ring the alarm-bell, call the people to arms, muster up our ten thousand national guards, and let us march in God's name.'

'To Fiorenzola, to Fiorenzola!' cried the law-student. 'We will flay the commissary De Ferrari alive.'

'Bravo,' retorted Brandi. 'March ten thousand men against fifty or sixty paltry carabineers, whom the first waving of the tricolour flag will blow all to atoms. But if you were so anxious for your father's hide, De Ferrari, why did you not join Captain Pelosi's detachment? By this time he is far on his way, and you have not a moment to lose.'

'Catch me joining that detachment under such a guide,' quoth our Catiline. 'Why, Captain Pelosi is just the man to run blindfolded into the lion's mouth.'

'There you are right, by J—s,' roared the drill-sergeant. 'What in the name of all the devils is the use of eighty or ninety young chaps who know not how to turn to the right or left, or how to handle a gun! *La discipline avant tout*, I tell you. Captain Pelosi never was a soldier. He was a thieftaker in the *Gendarmerie Imperiale*, and what does he know about the charge-en-douze-tems? I saw that detachment going out last evening at sunset, looking, of all things in the world, most like a flock of sheep, and hang me if like sheep they don't all get butchered to the last before we are three days older.'

'Now Heaven forbid!' I cried hastily. 'Who are they? who sent them? are they truly in danger?'

'Who are they, De Negri?—I'll tell you,' interposed my friend Brandi, ere the sergeant had time to reply. 'They are only a few volunteers from our ranks, chiefly students, but likewise sportsmen, and as sure of their man on the battle-field as they are of their snipe on the rice-ground. I revere discipline,' he continued, turning beseechingly towards Spavaldo, 'and the valiant sergeant knows it, for he gives me lessons twice a-day. But what we are now engaged in is a sort of guerilla warfare, and a few scores of sharpshooters will do more execution than a whole host of grenadiers.'

'They will have hard work, I promise you, your sharpshooters, if they meet a company of Tyrolese riflemen. I remember our *tirailleurs du Po*—'

'Bah! the Tyrolese!' observed Brandi, with an air of incredulity. 'What would become of our non-intervention? and if the non-intervention holds not, I ask you are we a match for Austria? What is the use of bragging about our ten thousand national guards? Think you all that are booked down are equally ready to fight? Are you aware of the dolorous fact, that we have got but three thousand guns to arm them?—and our artillery? upon my life a splendid park of artillery! for which forsooth we are envied by our neighbours of Romagna and Modena; four four-pounders and two carronades; fine forces to bring into the field against Austria! nay, to lay siege to Placentia! Why, man, it is garrisoned by three thousand Hungarians. It has got three hundred cannons on its ramparts. Do you think modern citadels are taken like the battlemented towers in the days of the "Rape of the Bucket?"'

'There you are, counting your enemies, you cold-blooded man of ciphers,' retorted the count. 'But since you lay your faith in numbers, I ask you, are there not five-and-twenty thousand people in Placentia ready to blow up town and citadel at a moment's bidding? Are they not Italians as we are, and more desperate fellows than we are? Did they not throw Pier Luigi Farnese from the windows of that very citadel you stand so greatly in dread of? As they treated the pope's bastard, so will they the mother of bastards.'

'My poor count,' replied the engineer, with a woful countenance, 'my poor count! either you have never seen Placentia, or are willing to blind yourself and others to the real state of things. That town, as well as all our miserable Italian cities, but especially those that have the misfortune of being also fortresses, lies utterly, helplessly, at the mercy of its garrison. Let the town only give signs of life, and it will be a heap of ruins in less than no time.'

'Very true,' echoed several voices.

'Ay, very true,' retorted the count sharply. 'Strange that all this never occurred to any of you before you set about your silly farce of last Sunday. Well, then, give up, like a set of pusillanimous cravens. Tie a rope round your neck, and walk barefooted to Placentia to crave forgiveness from the profligate Austrian wanton, from whom you know what clemency you have a right to expect.'

'If I tie a rope round my neck,' observed Spavaldo, moodily, 'it will only be to hang myself on a lamp-post.'

'Not so, please God,' rejoined Brandi. 'There is no reason as yet to fret or despond. If the Austrians attack us—I will never believe it till I see them at our gates—but suppose they attack us, why, we will just offer such resistance as is consistent with our means. Meanwhile we have leisure to prepare ourselves for the worst. We will make soldiers of our militiamen.' Here the sergeant nodded gravely. 'We will purchase arms from England and France. We will sound the higher powers by the means of dexterous agents. We will enter into a

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close, though secret, confederacy with the other revolutionized provinces. Meanwhile events will take their natural course. Rome will fall before the youthful band of Romagna. The pope will soon be got rid of. Can't you foresee the results of a tricolour standard waving from the height of the capitol? Are you not aware of the prestige attached to the name of our ancient metropolis? Naples and Tuscany will join us immediately. Charles Felix of Sardinia must die. Had he a hundred lives in his body, he must die. What next? The prince of Carignano ascends the throne———'

'The prince of Carignano is a traitor,' cried one.

'An apostate, a renegade, a cowardly traitor!' shouted another.

'Traitor or not,' continued the orator, 'he is an Italian.

'Hush! profane not that name,' cried De Ferrari, quoting Alfieri; 'tyrants have no country.'

'The house of Savoy is from the other side of the Alps,' added a young militiaman, who had been tutor of history and geography at the *Collegio dei Nobili*.'

'True, true, true,' said Brandi, answering all these charges; 'he is an apostate, a renegade; he has abjured his principles, and betrayed his accomplices; but he is young, vain, and ambitious. Think you the title of King of Italy has lost all charms for his ears? Think you he has any reason to trust the cabinet of Vienna? that he suspects not the intrigues by which Austria contrives to defraud him of his succession—to substitute the Duke of Modena in his stead? Come, come! Piedmont is our right arm, our main strength. Till we have got that, we cannot throw off our mask, and come to hard knocks with Austria. Meanwhile Austria has to think twice ere it dare to meddle with us. I do not indeed give the French as much credit, neither do I rely on the pact of non-intervention as firmly as other people do, or did. But are not Belgians, and Poles, and Germans, fighting for us?'

'More the shame for us, that we are not fighting for them,' interrupted the count.

'Who says so? To be sure we are not fighting. Why should we, if we are not attacked? How could we, if we have no means to attack? But, meanwhile, we keep the Austrians in check, and are getting ready for action.'

'Nice preparations, upon my word,' insisted the count; 'nice preparations we see going on. Why do they not organize and discipline us? Why don't they pull down the big bells from the steeples, and send them to the foundries. We could have hundreds of cannons in less than a week, and plenty of spare rope to hang the traitors therewith.'

'My dear friend,' expostulated the engineer, 'have patience yet awhile. Is it possible that a man of your sound sense can't see through the line of policy adopted by our national government? Come; though I know I should not reveal what is as yet a secret of state, yet we are here among friends, and a word in time may save us from some rash attempt, which will bring utter ruin on us all.'

Here the company drew near, and prepared to listen with redoubled interest. The haranguer, made aware of the sensation his words had created, assumed a more solemn, mysterious air, lowered his voice, and uttered every word with a slow emphasis, as a man who felt that every syllable is big with the fate of the country.

'Look you!' he said; 'either the non-intervention holds, or holds not. If it don't, we have no resource left but to entrench ourselves within our own walls, and fight with the courage of despair. But if that pact is respected, our object must be not to violate it ourselves by affording the first pretext of hostility. We must gain ground slowly, silently, and so manage it as to have always reason on our side.

'Now mark well! In accordance with the treaty of 1815, Austria had a right to garrison Ferrara and Placentia, though those two places belong politically to the pope and the Duchess of Parma, and are, in consequence, nominally independent. Those garrisons had therefore no right whatever to interfere with the civil administration of the cities. Now, what happens? The commanding officer of Ferrara, so far from encroaching upon the municipal privileges of the city, so far from making himself the abettor of the papal authorities, ordered his troops to withdraw from town, shut himself up in his citadel, and looked down on the tricolour flags that waved from every chimney top in the city, making it look as gay and gaudy as a garden in spring. The city of Placentia behaved otherwise. They knocked down all cockaded hats, and the heads that wore them. They hushed all revolutionary cry; offered a refuge to our wandering mistress, whom in an evil hour we suffered to escape, and are now affording her means of regaining her territory.

'You see very well that such a conduct implies contradiction and inconsistency, and this naturally arises from the irresolution of those commanders who, placed in new and difficult circumstances, have adopted provisional measures, acting each of them in accordance with the first impulse, but who can really do nothing, because they are waiting for orders.'

'Oh!' quoth Sergeant Spavaldo; 'those d—d Austrians understand discipline admirably.'

'So we ought too, sergeant,' replied Brandi; 'at least we have been at school under them long enough for it. Now then, what is our plan? Mind. To repel all aggression on the part of Maria Louisa's brigands—a task, God knows, easy enough—and drive them back to Placentia. To encompass that citadel with our insurrectional forces till the intentions of Austria are clearly defined, and either claim our inalienable right to our own

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good town of Placentia, if we continue at peace, or take it by assault or blockade on the first declaration of war.'

'Hurra! Long live our provisional government!' cried the majority of its partizans.

'Stuff and nonsense,' whispered a few of the opposition party.

'Friends and brothers,' continued the orator, with heartfelt emotion, 'listen to me. Will you really serve your country like disinterested men, ready to sacrifice personal ambition for the sake of public good? Nothing in the present times can be done without a spirit of association and harmony. What good can come of our eternal fretting and wrangling? Do you think our government acts with irresoluteness and timidity? If so, is it so difficult for us to drive them onwards in spite of themselves? Are we not, God be praised, thoroughly free? Why should we wait for orders to arm and discipline ourselves? Have we not means for our equipment? Can't we open subscriptions for the purchase of arms? Believe me, to malign our government, to murmur or conspire against it, is beneath the dignity of freemen. In our inexperience we have submitted to their sounder judgment. But are we not completely masters of ourselves? Have we not our free press, our newspapers, our popular meetings in the square, affording a wide field for the discussion of the wildest opinions? What government dare not attempt, it is always in our power to accomplish. Government proposes, but it is for us alone to dispose.'

'I will answer you for one,' said I, upon whom that speech had, as on many there present, made a considerable impression. I had all the privileges of a newly-arrived guest, and had not yet spoken, so that I was entitled to the attention of the audience. 'I, for one,' said I, 'intend to be the sole master of my own actions, and will prove it by riding out to-morrow at daybreak to join Captain Pelosi's detachment.'

'So will I,' cried Ferrari; 'give me time to saddle my horse, and I will be with you in a moment.'

'So will I—so will I!' shouted a great many voices with youthful eagerness.

'And so we all will,' repeated Brandi, solemnly. 'Hear me! It is the intention of government to send out as large a force as it can well muster up, to give the invasion of the Placentine territory as great an extent and activity as may be consistent with the preservation of peace. But the whole matter must be carried on with the least possible noise or parade. We will set out in small detachments, and act in separate bodies, though with the best understanding. De Negri, I am one of the commissioners of this vast though unostentatious expedition. I am to join Captain Pelosi at Fiorenzola the day after to-morrow. Sure enough you can afford to tarry a couple of days till we are enabled to start in a body.'

Instead of words, I answered by walking up to him, and shaking his hand heartily. Many of the party joined us; in a few seconds we had as many volunteers as could fairly be disposed of. Presently the watch was called out. The count, and some of his most obstreperous partizans were summoned to their duty; calm and silence were restored, and the morn dawned.

I called for a cup of coffee, once more shook hands with my friends, and rose to depart. Those who were left reseated themselves at table. Shouting, hurraing, and jingling of glasses recommenced. Presently a voice shouted 'La Romagnola! La Romagnola!' I stopped under the dark portico as the first notes of one of the many national songs of the day met my ear. It ran *à peu près* as follows:—

LA ROMAGNOLA.

To arms! to arms! The warlike sound
Revives our hopes, confirms our trust;
Our country's soil is hallowed ground,
The land we treat is hero's dust.

Arise! arise! Our glorious land,
Too long has been the land of woe.
Arise, Italia, sword in hand,
And strike against thy northern foe.

What though, like grass upon the glade,
Death mow the phalanx of the brave!
The laurel wreath doth never fade
That rests upon the patriot's grave.

An hour of strife has power to turn
A weary life to deathless fame,
The tears that bathe the patriot's urn
Wash off oblivion from his name.

To arms! to arms! . . . .

The rest was lost in the distance, as I walked slowly and reluctantly away.

CHAPTER XI.

Preparing and equipping for war.

'Arm! arm! It is—it is—the cannon's opening roar.'

Arriving at last at my father's house, I found our good people plunged into their genial slumbers, to which they had abandoned themselves, after having sat up till late after midnight in the vain hope that I might sooner or later remember that I had a home. I crossed the courtyard, and paid my first visit to the stable.

My proud steed was the only being awake in the house; so I walked up to him, led him out of his stall, patted his long neck, saddled him with my own hands, not to trouble the groom, who must have been sleeping on the premises, and mounted.

The fine animal, none the worse for those few days of comparative inaction to which my imprisonment had condemned him,

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bounded gaily and wantonly under his well-known rider, and as, except in cases of particular business, there was a compact between man and horse that the latter should have his own way, the good creature would by his instinct have been led to St. Martin; but the town gate being yet closed, I was compelled to thwart his intentions, reined him to the right, and rode down to the fine promenade which we call *lo Stradone*.

There was not a soul to be seen. I was alone with my horse and the sun, that began to rise from the east in all the splendour and gorgeousness that could well befit the 'dawn of Italian liberty.' Alas! from the first insurrectional movement of Bologna to the final extinction of our hopes, the Italian sun alone was true to his charge. Never since time immemorial had such a set of bright, calm, balmy days been enjoyed in Lombardy, during the earliest spring months, as we beheld in February and March, 1831. It seemed as if the laws that preside over the vicissitudes of the seasons had been providentially suspended, that the heavens might look undisturbed upon the noblest spectacle that the earth can offer to its Creator—the redemption and renovation of a fallen race.

Alone with God I was, and, penetrated with the solemnity of the hour, I lifted my voice towards the sky, and loudly and fervently, and with as much faith and ardour as all the faculties of my soul could inspire, prayed Him that my country's hope might be no illusion, and that it might please him, in his omnipotence, to say, 'Let there be an Italy!' Alas! but his designs are inscrutable, and are not to be hastened or averted by human supplications.

Not many hours afterwards I was seated at breakfast with the few that constituted my family circle—my father, my three blooming sisters, and my little boy of a brother. The only stranger present was Pippo Galli, my stout-hearted armourer. The greetings and congratulations being over, and all having been told and retold respecting our style of living, and our sources of amusement in prison, I turned rather abruptly to my father, and asked him, 'What had become of his sword?'

Seeing, however, that the old gentleman, though he did not openly refuse, still showed some repugnance to part with a weapon which he had honourably wielded for so many years under Napoleon, and entertained some trust of having still sufficient vigour left to unsheath it in a better cause; seeing, moreover, that the small-sword of infantry could ill answer my purpose, I abandoned the idea of bringing into the field my father's claymore, and went into Galli's workshop to look for my implements of war.

There, in the midst of a thousand specimens of ancient and modern, home and foreign manufacture, I made choice of an old-fashioned, rusty, ponderous falchion, which, for aught I knew to the contrary, might have belonged to some of the condottieri of the *Bracceschi* and *Sforzeschi* school. It was such an instrument as few men of the present day would choose to encumber themselves with. But my long practice of fencing, and a certain restless combativeness by which it seemed as if my very soul had settled in my right arm, had given it uncommon elasticity and strength, and steeled and inured it to the hardest exercises. Relying therefore on this bodily advantage, of which—notwithstanding the severe rebuke I had endured in my last duel—I was not a little vain, and accustomed, with the majority of my countrymen, to attach an almost superstitious veneration to all that is ancient, I set my heart at once on the broad-hilted cimeter, and, drawing it fiercely, I flourished it about with so much ease and mastership, that my friend the armourer, himself a powerful man, and an admirer of manly feats, laid his hand on my shoulder with half a patronising, half a sympathyzing air, and exclaimed, 'I think that will do, my good fellow.'

The name of the artificer, Oderisi da Brescia, was engraven on the blade; and having, guided by the same instinct, selected a huge pair of pistols by Lazarino Cominazzo, I thought that nothing remained but to don one of the ancient corslets and helmets that hung round the shod to complete Cervantes' description of his hero's equipment, when the valiant knight let his trusty weapon fall on his pasteboard helmet, to prove both the temper of his armour, and the weight and might of his arm. For it is just as well to observe, that between the character of that illustrious redresser of wrongs and myself there was more homogeneousness than I then cared to acknowledge, and the analogy was long afterwards pointed out to me by more than one of those fair critics, from whom the rebuke, however bitter, admitted of no retort or resentment.

Well—I met my sister Louisa on the threshold of our apartments, as I exultingly brought home those spoils of bygone ages. The loving girl, who on my first mentioning sharp-edged tools at the breakfast-table had turned pale, stood now in my way with tears and remonstrances, wondering 'how so severe a visitation as I had lately undergone had not yet brought me to my senses, and why I might not leave the warlike trade to the soldiers who were paid for it,' with other similar nonsensical observations, amply demonstrating how deeply-rooted the selfishness of private affections can be, even in the most guileless bosom, and how greatly women, in Italy at least, stand in need of a Spartan education.

However, so great, and powerful, and manifold, are the resources of love, that it is oftentimes not difficult to win the heart by such arguments as would otherwise have no hold upon reason. Such was the ascendency that affection gave me over that innocent soul, that not only I succeeded in drying her tears and laughing her out of her fears, but even induced her to look upon and to handle those formidable weapons, and to decorate the brown brass hilt of that rusty

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rapier with a tree love-knot of gay tricolour-riband, which she wore with her own hands, and requested me to wear as her favour.

Thus equipped, and unconscious of all there might have been absurd and preposterous in my warlike accoutrement, I strode gallantly out of doors. The streets were considerably more crowded than I ever remembered to have seen them, both on account of the influx of strangers from the country and the neighbouring states, and of that vague curiosity and disquietude that allowed no man to rest tranquilly under his roof.

The revolution at Parma had taken the aspect of a universal holiday. It was a general meeting, congratulating, visiting, and asking for news. The public curiosity being thus excited, there was no lack of charitable persons equally anxious to administer to it. The strongest rumours were afloat. Piedmontese and Neapolitan insurrections, gigantic battles on the Vistula, descent of French and English squadrons on the coasts of Romagna, and a hundred announcements, portending good or evil to what many began to think a premature and precarious revolution, were received and circulated with the most indiscriminate alacrity. The biggest lies were sure to have the longest run. Every postchaise was arrested. French *commis-voyageurs* and English tourists found themselves closely encompassed and questioned by active newsmongers. In those blessed days of equality every one was entitled to walk up to every one, take him by the hand, and ask for information. An eternal 'What's the news?' had superseded the eternal 'How d'ye do?' A crowd was stationed at each of the five gates, a crowd under the portico of the town-hall, a crowd before the vestibule of the palace. In the streets, in the squares, all over the town, there was a crowd; wherever two friends met and shook hands, the idlers clustered round them like bees, with staring eyes, with gaping mouths, with a 'What betide?' at the tip of their tongues.

Then there was drumming, parading, and mustering. The stray companies of the first national battalions, the embryo of a horse regiment, the musicians of Maria Louisa's late troops, were ostentatiously *promenaded* about. Even the boys of the lowest classes, the *birichini*, as they are named in our part of the country, ranked themselves into a juvenile militia, and marched in good and steady order, with broomsticks instead of guns, rattles instead of drums, their colonels mounted on stilts, and a flag at their head, on which was written, '*Elèves* of the National Guard.'

To this inquisitive and military ardour was added a new benevolent spirit, which seemed to have invaded every rank of our newly-emancipated townsmen. Besides greeting and hallooing each other with what in former times would have been thought vulgar and impudent familiarity, another, to me, still more disgusting practice prevailed—they were all addicted to the abomination of kissing.

Kissing, if exclusively turned to the proper object for which it was originally instituted, is at once a sacred and a genial ceremony, a mystic, magic language, of which the heart alone has the grammar and dictionary.

Young ladies, who are supposed not to know the full importance of its meaning, are apt to abuse it by saluting each other *à outrance*, especially at a dancing-party, when some of their gallant admirers are at hand, unaware, the poor things, of the tantalising effect that their sportive billing may have on the susceptible breasts of coveting bachelors. However, if it is true that 'handsome is that handsome does,' it is no less certain that 'all pretty looks that the pretty do;' and if we can manage to rein up our hearts so that they may not run wild at the sight, we must allow that kissing girls afford rather an amusing spectacle than otherwise.

But what shall we say of kissing men? Is it not astonishing that, after Judas Iscariot, men should still join lips—I should say moustaches—in token of friendship? that they ever should throw their arms around each other's neck, except for the purpose of wrestling? Can they not testify their pleasure of meeting, after John Bull's own style, by wringing each other's hand to mortification, and shaking each other's arms to dislocation?

The act had always something degrading in my eyes, and I was glad to see that the custom, never truly indigenous in Italy, was dying off with all the other transalpine manners imported among the evils of the late French invasion. The French are eminently a kissing nation, and from the time that the famous war *des amourettes* was resolved into kisses, to the late startling *émeute* of July, 1830, every political event has always been signalized in that country by a prodigious waste of hugging and bussing.

Our revolutionary heroes, whose main fault consisted in a blind imitation of the patriots of *Juillet*, and who, like all imitators, rather copied the follies than the true heroism of their models, put no end to their embraces, notwithstanding the frowns of severe censors, who openly discountenanced the silly practice, and very justly observed that it was 'no time to tilt with lips.'

Of those hated salutations, I, as one of the last arrived at that giddy festival, and one to whom persecution had attached peculiar interest, had more than my ample share, and certainly nothing could be more shocking to my feelings, or could more forcibly contribute to damp my revolutionary ardour, than that nauseous ordeal of unwelcome salutes, and as I shrank and writhed beneath the infliction of so many acts of endearment, and drew back and dried the moisture from my cheeks after the accolade, I felt that, had our independence continued, and had I appeared as a candidate for public suffrage,

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the ill grace with which I submitted to these nasty caresses would have proved fatal to my popularity, and precluded the way to my further promotion.

It would now be difficult to recollect how the rest of that and the following day were employed. I have a confused remembrance of having been introduced by my friend Brandi to the members of the provisional government, to have visited several clubs and cafés, the Cabinetto Letterario, and similar haunts of our most busy politicians, to have listened to endless harangues and disputations, to have dined at a public banquet on the first day, and to have had a headache on the next. On the first day I was duly enlisted in the registers of the national guard, and at my request engaged to take my round with the patrol on the following night. Little of importance took place during our watch. We had only the trouble to take two or three vagabonds to the station-house, and were compelled to break open the door, and violate the domicile of an honest cobbler, who was exercising the privilege of his free citizenship by beating his wife.

On the following evening, at sunset, the few volunteers who had received permission to join Captain Pelosi's detachment rendezvoused under the portico of the *Pilotta*. I called at the *Piazza del Duomo*, to take a hurried leave of Marina; I jumped on my war-horse, with my *Oderisi* dangling by my side, with my *Lazarine* in my holsters, and trotted to the place of our meeting. I found there about twenty *amateur men-at-arms* on horseback, nearly as many *tirailleurs* armed with double-barrelled guns, and half a company of Maria Louisa's late fusileurs. Colonel Fuseli, the commander-in-chief of the national guard, reviewed us. He mumbled a few words about discipline, order, and subordination, and dismissed us. Not a trumpet was flourished, not a drum rolled, not a standard unfolded; we departed in silence, like a procession of monks.

Has it ever occurred to you, reader, when engaged in the perusal of a chivalrous tale, to wonder how the hero could be made to roam so many days and weeks across mountains and deserts, without ever stopping at an inn to call for his supper, and without stabling his horse? If you have, I think you may now feel equally tempted to ask when and how I ever found leisure to sleep; for, if you had counted them right, you would find that this is the fourth night since my departure from the fortress of Compiano, in which I have hurried through novel and busy scenes without allowing myself an instant of rest. The first night was spent in that harum-scarum journey from Compiano to Bardi; the second was passed among the revels of the guard-room; on the third I was performing duty as a watchman; and here I am on the fourth, riding out for my first campaign.

Nature, however, could be defrauded no longer; and although I had, through juvenile caprice, inured my frame to the greatest privations, and, under circumstances of extraordinary excitement, I had, as I told you, fasted for four-and-eighty hours, and sat up studying or musing for four successive nights. I never before knew how dreadful it is to battle with sleep as I did through the march of that tremendous fourth night.

Between Parma and Borgo San Donnino there is a distance of fifteen miles, and as we started only at ten, we were expected to reach our destination not much before daylight.

Had I been permitted to give my horse the spur, and set on at full speed, I might have safely ridden all night, without being aware of my utter exhaustion; but as it was, as we were obliged to keep on with the toilsome, measured step of the infantry, and as our leaders had orders to spare us and our horses during the march, so as to arrive as fresh as we could contrive to the scene of action, we had no sooner crossed the drawbridge at the town-gate than I was overpowered. In vain I called to my aid all that, under other circumstances, proved most irresistibly exciting; in vain I thought of glory, of Italy, of Marina; in vain I strained my eyes till I nearly forced them from their sockets; in vain I goaded my good charger, in the hope that his bounds and capers could rouse me from my lethargic trance. I heard not, saw not, the three men-at-arms that were riding by my side. I saw not the road, the hedges, the horses—the rare and weary wayfarers we met on our progress—all objects went round and round my dizzy and throbbing head like a legion of shades. With slackened reins, with dangling head, with dropping jaws, I went on reeling and nodding to the right and left, literally drunken with sleep. The famous and splendid bridge on the Taro, nearly half a mile in length, the splendid ruins of Castel Guelfo, and other remarkable objects, were left behind, but I was utterly unconscious of having seen them. My three companions, whom the cool night air and the parting cups with which they had prepared themselves for their ride, had raised to an unusual flow of animal spirits, made sad sport of me and my horse. I was too far gone already to mind them, but the proud animal on which I was mounted could not so tamely submit to their taunting insolence; he reared up in his noble indignation, and threw his innocent rider on the dust, passive and helpless—as we say in Italy—'like a bag of rags.'

The fall awoke me. I looked up, and it seemed as if the starry vault of the firmament was following the unhorsed wight in his catastrophe. However, there is a providence, they say, for drunken people, and there must be one for sleeping riders also. I got up unscathed; I resigned my charger to one of the regulars, and obtained permission to continue my march among the *tirailleurs* on foot. Yet even walking I slept; and had it not been for the charity of my comrades, who pushed me along with them, I should have been left alone behind, standing like

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the statue of Lot's wife, till I had slept out the four nights in which I had so wantonly tampered with nature.

Thus I groped along to San Donnino; and when we finally arrived within sight of its old and ugly cathedral, when the blessed light of the new day dawned, I felt as refreshed and revived as if I had lain all night on a pillow of swandown.

Shortly before reaching the town, we met with a carriage drawn by four post-horses, which our vanguard deemed it expedient to arrest and reconnoitre.

An old lady, wrapped up in furs and shawls without number, peeped out at the window, and, with a very masculine voice, asked to speak to the commander of our detachment. The captain rode up, and the old lady, throwing back the thousand folds of her winter garb, 'Gottardi,' she exclaimed, 'how very glad to find you at the head of the foremost ranks of these brave youths! Do you not know me? I am your old friend, General Zucchi. I have just escaped from Milan, eluding the vigilance of the Austrian police. Brave young men!' continued the veteran, waving his hand wildly around, for his hoarse voice could not be well heard by the whole company, 'march on boldly and cheerfully. Dismay and confusion reign among our Austrian tyrants! The day is our own.'

'Viva l'Italia!' cried our young men, and their cheers continued—a flagrant breach of discipline—till the old warrior of the kingdom of Italy, the best general of Eugene Beauharnois, and his clumsy conveyance, were out of sight.

We reached Borgo San Donnino, as I have said, where we found that Captain Pelosi was waiting for our reinforcement ere he ventured on his attack against Fiorenzola. We were allowed to restore our forces by a few hours of rest, and the most conspicuous townsmen stepped forward, and threw open their houses to receive the deliverers of the country. I ate a very good supper, or breakfast, and threw myself on my couch just as the first rays of the sun made their way through the window-shutters. Sleep, however, I never could; and after turning twice or thrice on my pillow, I ventured down stairs to the dining-room, where I found a young provincial beauty, whose rosy cheek and coal-black eyes had smitten me, while I was apparently all absorbed in the important business of swallowing my early meal. The young damsel was 'as kind as she was fair,' and, forgetting—no, not forgetting, but thinking less of—the only woman that reigned immortal in my breast, I was already falling in love with all the impetuosity of a young soldier, when, in good time, the *générale* was rolled, and the national force summoned together in the square.

The young militiamen who had followed Captain Pelosi amounted to nearly one hundred, and these, joined to our own riflemen, to our regular infantry, and little body of cavalry, constituted an army of less than two hundred men. The fusileers alone were dressed in the ancient uniform of their sovereign. The national guard generally wore sportsmen's coats, *blouses*, caps, and other fancy dresses, which made the whole company resemble a troop of armed brigands. The cavalry were rather better equipped, and generally well mounted. Captain Pelosi was the commander-in-chief of the whole detachment: Captain Gottardi was master of the horse under his orders. Brandi and two other engineers followed in the rear-guard, under the title of commissaries—I never knew to what purpose.

Captain Gottardi and our lieutenant Modesti were two of Napoleon's veterans. The first, at the restoration, had been appointed captain of the body-guards (guardie d'onore) of Maria Louisa. Modesti had been less fortunate. He was a married man with children, and, deprived of his pension for his attachment to the sect of the Carbonari in 1820, he had gained his livelihood by exercising the profession of a fencing-master. He had been one of my teachers of that noble art, in which he possessed a skill not easily matched in Italy. He was, however, affable and polite, and had nothing of the swaggering air that characterizes men of his calling. But he was endowed with a stern though unassuming bravery, which could bear him through the most desperate trials.

My other comrades had generally served in the body-guards of our duchess, and were therefore better acquainted with the military management of a horse than I was. I knew them but slightly, and the tone of raillery with which they alluded to my unwarlike conduct and my mishaps of the preceding night was not calculated to promote our further intimacy. I rode, therefore, side by side with the lieutenant, and had on my left a sturdy-looking fellow, a farrier by trade, but known as the hero of many popular riots, and who went by the name of *Lione*. It was said that, in a nocturnal encounter, he had broken through twelve gendarmes who had been sent to arrest him, floored three of them, and badly wounded several others. He was mounted on a stupendous grey horse, and had certainly the mien of one of the stoutest warriors that either Roman or mediæval Italy could boast.

I had a greater number of friends among the *voltigeurs* that marched after us. Besides Galli and some of the captives at Compiano, I met many of my boyish schoolfellows. Count Berardi and the young law-student, De Ferrari, marched side by side. This last seemed to exult at the idea of being on the eve of going to war with his father.

The eight miles that divide San Donnino from the town we were going to expugn were made in little more than two hours. Before we arrived in sight of Fiorenzola, the townspeople came to meet us with the announcement that the commissary and his little band had withdrawn. We rode on at full speed to reconnoitre;—we had conquered before we arrived.

The afternoon was spent in rejoicing and

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fraternising with the good people in town. Berardi and De Ferrari, frustrated in their hope of finding the commissary hidden in some corner of the municipal palace, amused themselves by felling to the ground the ducal arms that hung on the door. Our flag was seen waving from the balcony at the Town-hall, and some of our eloquent demagogues addressed the people in the square.

Night came. The caserne at Fiorenzola was filled with our sixty fusileers; Captain Pelosi was at a loss how to quarter the rest of his little army. He yielded to the entreaties of the good citizens of the place, and distributed his troops among them. A few were lodged in the inns about town; the rest were allowed to accept such hospitality as it was in the power of those good burgesses to afford. Our horses and ourselves were quartered in the *osteria del sole*, nearly in the centre of the borough, opposite to the Town-hall.

About ten a young *commis-voyageur* put up at our inn. He came from Placentia, and announced that he had perceived a great stir and bustle among the troops of the garrison. He was brought before Captain Pelosi, who listened to him with contempt. In vain did the officers of his staff remonstrate against the imprudence of thus disbanding his forces, at the distance of only twelve miles from an Austrian citadel.

Nothing could be more comical than his final exhortation, as he called us around him at sunset, and dismissed us for the night. 'Children,' he said, 'I hope you know me. My father was hanged as a Carbonaro; my brother sent to the galleys. If they catch me, I'll give them leave to serve me in the same way. So now go to bed, like good lads. We have to deal with a pack of cowardly hinds. They did not wait for us—'cause why? because they are afraid. The Austrians must look on and be silent. The blessed Virgin and the non-intervention guard you! Go to sleep!'

Notwithstanding the warning of the French traveller, and the advice of his subalterns, he trusted his safety to the Virgin and the non-intervention. He sent every one, and went himself, to bed.

Captain Gottardi did not follow his example. He questioned and cross-examined the *commis*, whom he did not trust. Finally, he summoned us into the parlour, placed a sentinel at the door, ordered our horses to be saddled and bridled, and bade us not to undress or lay down our arms. Then he stretched himself on the floor, and, our supper being over, many of us followed his example.

None, perhaps, slept more soundly than myself. How long I lay plunged in death-like lethargy on the oaken floor I hardly can tell, but it was still dark, a pitch-dark night, when the report of several discharges of musketry suddenly roused us from our slumbers.

CURIOSITIES OF LEGAL EXPERIENCE.

BY A SOLICITOR.

THE MOTHER AND HER SON.

There are some crimes the commission of which requires some virtues. A cold selfishness of character is a sort of plate armour, securing the wearer from many a dangerous assault, by which the generous and warm-hearted are utterly destroyed. Want of feeling thus supplies the place of strength of principle, and the man goes right merely because he has no inducement to go wrong. It is undoubtedly true that public justice can never overlook a crime because the motive of the criminal was good. The wolf that ravages our flocks must be shot, though he does but follow his natural instinct; and the man who attacks the life or invades the property of others must be punished, however natural or even praiseworthy the motives which urged him on. Still, as a question of abstract right, it may perhaps admit of a doubt whether the coldly correct stand higher in the scale of morality than those whom strong affections and keen sympathies for others have hurried into serious errors.

In every place where there is a gaol, some professional man will generally be found exercising the high employment of gaol-attorney. The qualifications for this post are an acquaintance with criminal law, and some knowledge of the world, combined with acuteness of intellect and imperturbable assurance. If in addition to these qualities the gentleman is perfectly free from scruples of any kind, and can manage to make friends with the gaoler or even the inferior turnkeys, he is almost certain to obtain a monopoly in his particular line, as defender of thieves and vagabonds. It was therefore with some surprise that early in my professional career I found myself called upon to defend a man imprisoned on a charge of embezzlement in the county town where I had been keeping holiday towards the end of the long vacation. By a reference to my journal it appears that my retainer for the prisoner took place on the 4th of October, 18—.

This evening, after a long walk, 'my custom always in the afternoon,' I found a card on my return from a Mr. John Brown, with an intimation written in pencil that he would call again at eight o'clock 'on business.' Now what business can it be? And who the deuce is John Brown? There is something very nervous to a beginner in the idea of a new client, and sundry fidgetty attempts to divine what he had come about quite spoiled my usual enjoyment of my sister's quiet tea-table. 'O Hesperus,' sings Lord Byron, imitating the Greek poet, 'O Hesperus, thou bringest all good things,—home to the wretched, to the weary rest;' to which general good character I beg leave to add my particular testimony in confirmation, since on this occasion Hesperus in due time brought Mr. John Brown.

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I stepped into the library, and saw at a glance that my client was a young ruddy-faced impudent Irishman. 'Some scrape at the police-office,' thought I; and as I cordially detest all such matters, my reception was proportionably cool. Mr. Brown, however, advanced with open palm and a 'How are you, Misther D——, how are you? Ah then I'm glad to see you, sir, at last. How are you, sir? how are you?' We shook hands, or rather he shook mine most vigourously; then laying down a thundering stick and a particularly broad-brimmed hat, he drew a chair close up to mine, thrust his face still closer, and began his story in the most familiar manner, as if we had been acquainted for a century. Now to me this sort of thing is peculiarly offensive; I like to have a table between me and a client, and to keep up a little decent formality in all intercourse with strangers, so that my visitor's manner quite disgusted me, and for some time I listened to his narrative in a very bad humour. He told me that he was come about a 'frind in throuble,' who wanted some one to back him up against his 'inimies;' that I was the person selected for this honourable office, and that he with several others had clubbed together to raise the needful, his 'frind' being much too poor to obtain legal assistance. Would I undertake to manage it? and if I would, would I promise, upon the honour of a gentleman, never to tell who had employed me? I replied very coldly that I could make no such promise, and that if his friend was under any criminal charge he had better go to Mr. ——, (the gaol-attorney,) whose experience in those matters was far beyond mine. 'So we would in a minute,' replied the Hibernian, 'if he didn't live in the town and know us all as well as his own children. Besides he's not a gentleman, as Andy Murphy says, and may be he'd split upon us to the governors.' I could not help looking at the speaker's vulgar face, long greasy hair, and enormous shirt-pin, when he thus criticized the plebeian attorney; but the fact is, that every Irishman above the degree of a bog-trotter considers himself a born gentleman.

'Maybe you've heard of poor Bill Lyon's misfortune?' he continued.

'Lyon,' said I, 'Lyon? you don't mean the young man from the Bank, who was brought up before the magistrates last week on a charge of embezzlement?'

'Faith and troth that's him, then,' said Brown, with an expressive shake of the head.

'If I remember right, it was a melancholy case; something connected with his mother?'

'It was, sir.'

'And the young man had previously borne a good character?'

'The best of *charakters*,' said my friend, nodding despondingly.

'Well,' said I, 'if that be the case, we must see what can be done. The bankers, I suppose, are determined to prosecute?'

'There's small doubt of that,' he replied bitterly. 'It's but a trifle poor Bill took, and they'd never miss it, for they're rowling in money; but all's one for that. They'd kill a cat for *looking* at a herrin', I'm thinking, let alone eating it.'

'You, I suppose, are merely a friend of his?'

'I'm a clerk in the same banking-house, that's the truth of it. I and two more have clubbed together to help poor Billy out of his troubles, and if the governors knew it they'd be mad entirely. So you must keep all snug, you see; and where's the harm?'

He then inquired what sum would probably be requisite to get up Bill's case, and provide him with a 'counsellor?' On my naming five pounds, he snapped his fingers exultingly.

'Chut!' he exclaimed; 'haven't we tin pound ready? and wouldn't we make it tin more in no time? Will I leave it with you now, sir?' he said, producing a little purse.

'No, no,' I replied hastily; 'time enough for that. I will make inquiries to-morrow, and if you can call in the evening, I shall be able to give an opinion on the case;' and so our conference ended. Really if John Brown would have his hair cut, and not be quite so familiar, he would be 'very tolerable, and not to be endured.'

October 5. Obtained a copy of the depositions against Lyon from the clerk of the peace. I fear there is little hope of escape; the proof of embezzlement appears to be complete. (The evidence showed that the prisoner had been a clerk in the banking-house of Waters, Reynolds and Waters, for three years; the witness to this being no other than Mr. John Brown. That it was prisoner's duty to receive money paid into the bank, to take up bills made payable there, and that on the 23d of September last he had received from a man of the name of Sims, a small tradesman in the town, the sum of four pounds ten shillings, being the amount of a bill which Sims had accepted. For this sum he had not accounted at all to the bankers, but, on the contrary, had represented that the bill had not been paid. The fraud was not immediately discovered, because Lyon was the person in whose department such transactions lay; and it was only by an accidental call on Sims by one of the partners, as he was passing the shop, that the truth had come out.)

In the evening Brown called again, bringing with him the prisoner's mother, Mrs. Mary Lyon. She was an infirm old woman, apparently between sixty and seventy; but her deep-lined face and small weaselly eyes betokened a spirit which neither age nor infirmity could tame. The little black bonnet, closely pinned old shawl and faded gown, were still worn with an air that spoke of former respectability, and she made her curtsey, took her seat, and drew out her

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spectacles, with a staid and formal gravity evidently intended to show that she knew what 'manners' were. While I was questioning Brown about the witnesses, and making notes as to several things he mentioned, Mrs. Lyon sat upright in her chair, seemingly wrapped up in her own reflections, and uttering occasionally such exclamations as 'Ay me!' 'God help us!' and the like; but when I expressed my opinion that the prisoner had no defence, her attention was at once aroused.

'What's that ye say, sir?' she inquired sharply; 'and why wouldn't he be defended, I'd like to know, when the money's *ped* for a counsellor?'

I explained à la member of parliament, but the explanation, as usual, proved unsatisfactory.

'Misther D— doesn't know about the money, ma'am,' suggested John Brown; 'maybe that'll make a differ.'

'It makes all the differ,' replied the old lady; 'but how could I tell it when ye'd had all the talk to yourself? Ye see, sir, Billy's a clever boy, and could sack the schoolmasther; he got a sight of learnin' at ould Thrinity, though he didn't see the ind of it, because he couldn't in regard of misforthunes. Och! my heart's broke with them, and I'd be glad to be lying dead in my coffing this blessed minnit, God knows I would. Ay me! Well, sir, ye see, they druv us out of house and home, all along of Tom Brown the agent, who spoke again' me to his honour and the markis's agent too; and so atween him and Burg'yne I was ruinated intirely. Och! but they're great folks now thim two; but I mind the time when Tom Brown hadn't a shirt to his back, nor Burg'yne neither, the pair of vagabonds.' Here a grim smile lit up her strongly-marked features as she recounted the low origin of her persecutors; for to be 'come of dacent people' is an advantage as much valued by the Irish now as in the days of St. Patrick.

After a variety of episodes and digressions which tried my patience severely, the important matter which, according to Mrs. Lyon, was to 'make all the differ' turned out to be this. Her son had contributed several articles to a London periodical, for which about five pounds were due to him. For this sum he had written to the editor two or three times, but no answer had been received until this morning, when a letter arrived containing the amount due. The old lady immediately posted off to the bankers, and the interview is too characteristic to be related in any words but her own. '"Good morning, sirr," I said to ould Waters, when thim blaggards of futmen would let me by; "and I'm come about the thrifle o' money my boy had the ill luck to borry o' you, instid of going to a better frind." "You're Mrs. Lyon, I suppose," says he, quite grand like. "O it's well you know me," says I, "and good reason me and mine has to know you for the throuble and worry you've been to us. There niver was a bether boy than Billy, nor couldn't be; and it's a black shame to see him druv about this way. I'll sit down, sirr," says I, "by your lave," for he never had the manners to ask me. "Rasly, Mrs. Lyon," says he, getting very red, "this is quare behavour." "Not at all, sirr," says I, "not at all; havn't I come to pay the money ye've made sich a 'ruction about? It's four pound tin, Billy tells me, and there's a fi' pun note; so I'll throuble you for the differ." "I'm very sorry," says he, scratching his head like a hen on a dunghill, "I'm very sorry—" "Are ye?" says I, "are ye? Good reason ye have, and plinty, but it's mighty little use now, I'm thinking. Ye'll just give me a recate, and I've done with you." "It's too late," says he. "It isn't," says I. "I'm bound over," says he, "to appear again' him, and it's a folly to talk of paying the money now. I can't take it any way." "Thin the widdy's curse light on ye," says I, "ye wicked ould man. May your hearth be dark and your home childless for iver! May ye die cold and lonesome and desolate, and may your inimies spit upon your grave! Amin, Amin!"' And with this malediction the old lady had left the astonished banker, having done the best to render her son's case still more desperate than before. But it was no use to tell her so, or to explain that repaying the money taken could not possibly do away with the offence of taking it; so she went off with Mr. John Brown under the full persuasion that by offering the money back her son's misconduct had been entirely cleared.

October 7. This morning I had an interview with William Lyon at the gaol. Poor fellow! he is terribly cast down, and but for the sake of his mother I have little doubt would confess all. That he fully intended to repay the money I feel certain, and nothing but extreme want could have induced him to take it for a moment. He seemed highly gratified at the exertions his friends in the office were making for him, but with no expectation of success. The chaplain, I find, visits him constantly, and I should not be much surprised if after all he were to plead guilty. Still even in that case there are many circumstances in extenuation, and with proof of these we must at all events be prepared.

October 15. The sessions begin to-day. William Lyon's defence is all ready, and the brief delivered to Mr. Wilton, a young barrister who has lately joined. I know nothing of him, nor indeed of the other counsel who attend; but a young lady, a friend of my sister's, made earnest solicitations on his behalf, under strict injunctions to secrecy. My sister, however, had the malice to tell me the truth while she was present, and she looked so prettily confused, and blushed so charmingly, that it was quite impossible to say no. Besides, there will really be very little to do, as we cannot hope for an acquittal.

Eleven, A. M. The grand jury are charged,

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and the counsel are taking their seats. The last in the row I hear is Mr. Wilton. A handsome young man, upon my word! no wonder Miss ——— was so much interested about him. I got round to talk with him on Lyon's case, and see what he was like. He seems intelligent and ready enough, but nervous, I am afraid, rather nervous; and I begin to wish I had not yielded to Miss ———'s bright eyes. However, there he is, and there's Mr. John Brown and Mrs. Lyon, I declare, just under the witness box, and the bankers in the seat above. Several ladies occupied the grand jury benches behind us, among whom I soon discovered my fair friend. I could not repress a half smile as I caught her eye, upon which she coloured up and turned her head away with an air of prodigious dignity. Bills were soon found, and the trials began. The common sessions offences are almost all thefts of some sort, more particularly I think for stealing ducks, bacon, and pigs, farmer's corn, washerwomen's linen, new shoes and old umbrellas. Several of these important cases had been disposed of when the grand jury came into court for the third time with a large batch of bills, among which the clerk of the peace read out, 'A true bill against William Lyon for a felony;' and great was the stir this announcement created among the parties interested. Mrs. Lyon uttered an 'Ay me!' and a succession of low groans; John Brown ran his fingers briskly through his long hair, and glanced across at me; the counsellor wrote on his brief 'bill found,' reddened and fidgetted, and then squinted on each side of him to see if any one was observing him; while Miss ——— opened her large eyes, and looked as if she expected her favourite to go off at once in some unimaginable strain of the sublime and beautiful. But the clerk went on with the list in his usual routine; the stealers of ducks and umbrellas were tried and sentenced as before with official regularity, and four o'clock had arrived before William Lyon, with several others, was brought to the bar to be arraigned previous to his actual trial.

'William Lyon, hold up your hand,' said the clerk of the peace; and, on the prisoner obeying, the nature of the indictment was shortly stated to him, and the usual question put, 'How say you, guilty or not guilty?' After a moment's pause the prisoner replied in a low tone, 'Guilty.' Mrs. Lyon was up in an instant, struck her clenched hand on the table, and was about to give vent to some violent expression, when the chairman's voice, warning the prisoner of the consequences of his plea, arrested her attention. Lyon, however, without raising his head, again pleaded guilty, and the clerk recorded it accordingly.

'Is it mad ye are, Billy? is it stark staring mad ye are?' screamed the old lady at the top of her voice, but the constables immediately interfered to stop her, and John Brown whispered her not to mind what Billy said at all, for wasn't the counsellor discoorsing him and wouldn't he tell him the rights of it? In fact Mr. Wilton, while the clerk was arraigning the other prisoners, succeeded in changing Lyon's determination, and, on applying to the judge, his plea of Guilty was struck out, and Not Guilty inserted. He was immediately put upon his trial.

The counsel for the prosecution, a tall bulky man, with a strong voice, and somewhat pompous manner, opened the case at greater length than usual, and Mr. Wilton made a little note every now and then, merely, I believe, to conceal a nervous red-hot flushing of the face, which threatened to set his wig on fire. The junior partner of the banking firm was then called to prove that the money had been paid into the bank for the use of the firm, and not accounted for, Mr. Wilton asking him a few questions as to the prisoner's character and general conduct with tolerable steadiness. Sims, the acceptor of the bill, stated that he had paid the money to the prisoner himself; and John Brown was then put into the box to prove the same fact, together with the time during which Lyon had been in the office, &c. The jaunty air with which the Irishman kissed the book, ran his fingers through his hair, and arranged an astounding red velvet waistcoat, evidently produced no favourable impression on the prosecuting counsel; and as Brown, according to the custom of Irish witnesses from time immemorial, considered himself called, not merely to speak the truth, but to have a battle-royal with the counsellor, and do his friend as little damage as possible, the aforesaid counsellor began to raise his voice, and thunder away in grand style at the refractory witness. John Brown, however, quibbled and prevaricated so glaringly that he did us considerable damage, without succeeding in keeping back anything material; and when Mr. Wilton examined him as to the prisoner's poverty, the privations he endured, and so on, he persisted with true Irish feeling in asserting that Lyon was living in a decent creditable manner, though contrary to the fact, and though it told against the prisoner. 'Call you this backing your friends? A plague on such backing,' thought I, as Mr. John Brown left the box a little crestfallen, after having disgusted both counsel, besides receiving a peculiar glance from the chairman, and an ominous shake of the head from 'ould Waters.' When the case for the prosecution ended, and Mr. Wilton rose to address the jury, I was surprised at the easy smoothness with which he spoke. The facts had been decidedly proved, and he avowed at once that the prisoner had withdrawn the plea of guilty solely at his persuasion, and on condition that no defence should be made, but that counsel should merely speak to the extenuating circumstances. He then urged with much earnestness and feeling the extreme poverty to which Lyon had been reduced, principally by supporting his mother, and the evident intention on his part to replace the money, which the sum due from the magazine editor would

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have enabled him to do. He stated that proof would be given that the prisoner had pawned or sold everything but the clothes he wore to supply his mother's necessities, and had besides employed his time, after the bank closed, in writing for different periodicals, so that in fact he had been led into crime by no vicious indulgence or vain extravagance, but by strong filial affection for his aged mother, and she a widow. The young counsellor's address evidently made an impression on the court and jury, but as to Miss ——, she cried at least two handkerchiefs full, astonishing those around her by such a display of liquid sensibility. The prisoner's landlord, a neighbouring pawnbroker, and two witnesses to character, supported the counsellor's statements, and last of all Mrs. Lyon herself was called. There was evidently a general sympathy with the old lady as she spoke, with tears in her eyes, of 'Billy's' dutiful 'behaviour,' and what a comfort he was to her, but she too endeavoured, like Brown, to conceal the extent of their poverty. In spite of the opposite counsel's interruption, she related at full length her interview with the banker, and his refusal to receive the money, shaking her fist at 'ould Waters,' as she concluded; but on cross-examination, she spoiled all by admitting, or rather boasting, that she had invited friends to pass the evening twice within a fortnight of Billy's offence, and had treated them on each occasion with tea and muffins, and whisky punch in plenty. In vain Mr. Wilton tried to elicit the fact that she and her son had almost starved themselves for weeks to furnish forth those unlucky banquetings; the proud old lady evaded all such inquiries, and, as English people do not understand this sort of Irish pride, a very unfavourable impression was made, as though the prisoner had embezzled his employer's money in order to support an unprincipled extravagance. The jury, indeed, on returning a verdict of guilty, added a recommendation to mercy, but there was a considerable difference of opinion among the magistrates as to the punishment to be inflicted, and the chairman was obliged to take the votes seriatim. The majority were for the severer sentence, and the prisoner, to the surprise of most persons, was transported for seven years. Mrs. Lyon dropped down as if she was shot, and was carried out of court senseless.

That same evening I accompanied my sister to an evening party, where Miss —— also was present. The high opinion I expressed of her favourite was rewarded by a most winning smile, and an invitation to play a game of chess, though I strongly suspect the cunning little gipsey was calculating on coaxing more briefs out of me for her friend. Nothing pleases a girl more than to believe that she has been able to assist her lover by her own personal address; and Wilton, I think, may safely be considered a lover, for when he entered the room about an hour afterwards, it was all over with our game of chess. She watched his every movement from the corner of one eye, listened with restless eagerness to the good-natured congratulations which his friends offered in abundance, and prodigious was the play and rustle of fan, gloves, and handkerchief, when the handsome favourite began a lively laughing conversation with a whole bevy of bright-eyed damsels. Still the reciprocity seemed to be all on one side, until in the course of the evening I happened to pass by the counsellor, as he stood beside Miss —— apparently showing her some beautiful Egyptian drawing, and overheard him whisper, from the then recent poem of poor L. E. L.,

> 'I hear the words of praise, but not
> The *one* voice that I love to hear;
> And other sounds to me are but
> Sweet music to a sleeper's ear.'

The young lady, to do her justice, tried to receive the compliment with indifference; and if her cheeks did glow, and her eyes sparkle, and her soft heart beat quicker and quicker, it was certainly a case of rebellion on the part of these organs, and entirely without the leave and licence of the owner. Ah, how soon the best and fairest lose that transparency of character, through which it is so delightful to trace the bud and blossom of natural feelings! It is like gathering violets in the early spring.

Poor Mrs. Lyon never held up her head after her son's transportation. She used to steal out at dusk to buy the tea and stuff which seemed to constitute her whole subsistence, often keeping her room for days together without seeing any one. At length a seclusion longer than usual excited the neighbours' attention, and her door was forcibly entered, when she was found lying on a wretched palliasse, in a state of extreme weakness from sheer starvation. The moment her case was known, numbers came forward to assist her; but life had sunk too low to be re-kindled, and the old lady herself had no wish to be restored; all her anxiety was to have a 'dacent berrin,' with a pall and a mourning coach to follow. This, with true benevolence, was faithfully guarantied; and the poor old creature, proud to the very last, felt happy in her dying hours at the thought of how respectable her funeral would be.

William Lyon himself fortunately reached Sydney before transportation was so heavy a punishment as it is now. Within a very short time he obtained a 'ticket of leave,' enabling him to work for himself, which was followed by an absolute pardon at the end of five years. He still remains in New South Wales, where, by good conduct and steady industry, he has acquired considerable property, and is reckoned one of the most prosperous settlers in that thriving colony.

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JACOB FAITHFUL'S SONG.

SHE SPEEDS, MY GOOD SHIP.

AIR—'Around the huge Oak.'

She speeds, my good ship; like a bird in its flight,
O'er the proud crested billows we go;
See her white wings expand in the morn's purple light,
We shall soon glimpse the flag of the foe.

Though our bosoms may sigh for the land we forsake,
As the feelings of nature prevail,
Put the honour of England and life to the stake,
And our swords will at once sink the scale.

Oh! never shall England be trammell'd with chains,
For which Rodney and Nelson have bled;
Their names shall arouse all the blood in our veins,
And give life to the pulse of the dead.

In my good ship of oak, with as gallant a crew
As e'er boarded the decks of the brave,
We will show them what true British sailors can do,
For Britannia is queen of the wave.

'O think of the deeds which your forefathers wrought,
In the days of their pride, on the deep,
Till a flame from their phœnix-like ashes you've caught,
That shall hallow their glorious sleep.

'A sail, boys! a sail! 'tis the ensign of France;
Three cheers for old England! and then,
With a broadside that frightens bold Neptune, advance,
And give fight with the courage of men.

'If we fall, 'tis for England; and sweet are the eyes
That will weep for the sons of the sea!
If we live, 'tis for glory, our homes, and our ties,
Well bought with the blood of the free.'

FANNY FAIRFAX.

A TALE.

CHAPTER I.

In a pretty little drawing-room, the French windows of which opened upon tolerably extensive grounds, sat a lady apparently about the middle period of life; the expression of her still handsome countenance was that of deep melancholy, and though materials for needle-work were in her hands, the blinding tears which every moment forced themselves into her eyes evidently impeded the progress of her occupation. At short intervals those tearful eyes were turned towards one of the windows, from which two figures were discerned at some distance from the house, slowly approaching it, and evidently engaged in earnest conversation. At length the lady rose from her seat, and clasping her hands, exclaimed, 'Doubtless it is as I feared! all must now be known. My poor boy! O, would that Heaven had spared you this blow! But I am a fool ever to have imagined that it could be otherwise!' and throwing herself on the sofa, she covered her face with her hands, and gave free indulgence to her grief for some minutes. She was roused by the sudden opening of the French window, and a youthful and lovely female figure entered, with a hurried step, a flushed cheek, and a sparkling eye, denoting considerable agitation. She no sooner perceived the occupant of the sofa, than she rushed towards her, exclaiming, as she threw herself into her arms, 'O Mrs. Seymour, my more than mother, here I come, as usual, to you in all my troubles.'

'Troubles, my dear Fanny!' exclaimed Mrs. Seymour, affecting an appearance of cheerfulness; 'what is the matter? Have

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Charles Hargrave and you had a quarrel? I saw him with you just now.'

'Quarrel! O no!—that is—not exactly,' answered Fanny hesitatingly, and colouring deeply.; 'no! it is not that—but—I see you are not yourself in spirits, and consequently I will not annoy you with my affairs.'

'*You* never can annoy me, Fanny; and however low-spirited I may be, you can always command my advice, my heartfelt sympathy.'

'Indeed, my kind friend, I have good reason to know it; but I can scarcely tell what I am saying, I have been so agitated, so surprised—you would never guess what has occurred.'

'I am more clever than you think me, Fanny,' said Mrs. Seymour in a sorrowful tone, 'for I can guess Charles Hargrave has just proposed and you have accepted him.'

'*I* accepted him!' exclaimed Fanny, in a tone of astonishment approaching to indignation; 'you are right indeed as far as he is concerned, but how could you imagine that I could accept him?'

'Why should I doubt it, Fanny? Is he not amiable and unexceptionable in every respect?'

'O yes! he is very good, very amiable: but I could not marry him for the world,' she added with increased vehemence.

'My dear child, you astonish me.'

'Then *you* too, Mrs. Seymour, have misunderstood me—have thought that I meant to encourage his attentions. O, then I cannot acquit myself; I must have been to blame;' and she hid her face in her hands, and burst into tears.

'Calm yourself, my dear girl, I am sure you would not intentionally mislead. Lookers on are sometimes more clearsighted than persons more immediately interested in what is passing; and aware as I am of your beauty and amiability, I was perhaps disposed to expect that any one admitted to such frequent intercourse with you would not prove insensible to their charms.'

'Beauty!' exclaimed Fanny; 'I have long ceased to attach any importance to that; and as for my amiability, if I have indeed heedlessly occasioned pain to so warm a heart as that of Charles Hargrave, *my* claims to amiability are very questionable.'

'But it is not too late to make him amends, now that you are aware of his sentiments,' said Mrs. Seymour, with an anxious and inquiring glance.

'Yes, 'tis much too late; I cannot return his affection—it is impossible.'

'But why impossible, Fanny, thinking so highly of him as you evidently do?'

Fanny stooped to arrange her sandal, and to conceal the deep blush which overspread her lovely countenance as she answered—

'Do not, dear Mrs. Seymour, urge me to marry. I am perfectly happy as I am in this my dear home. I could not bear to part from you, and what would Edward do without me?—he would surely be very lonely. Who would lead him to all his favourite haunts as I do, for who knows them so well? Who could read to him all his favourite authors as he wishes them to be read, for who enjoys them as I do?'

'No one, indeed, could replace you, my dearest Fanny,' said Mrs. Seymour, warmly; 'nowhere could he find one so prompt to aid his helplessness, so eager to alleviate his misfortune. But, my dear child, Edward and I must not allow our selfish feelings to delude us. These happy days cannot last; you will not be allowed to remain with us. Your pleasures, your enjoyments, must not be confined to this narrow sphere; you are destined for brighter things than to cheer the lonely widow's hearth, or to gladden the heart and guide the footsteps of her afflicted child.'

'O do not say so; I desire no brighter destiny. I wish for no change; I have no other hope than to be allowed still to remain with you. Have you not supplied to me the place of a mother? and do I not love you as such?'

Mrs. Seymour only replied by clasping her in her arms, and, after a moment's pause, she said—

'But, my dear Fanny, you must consider you will soon have your father's claims to attend to; they cannot be overlooked'

'I know it but too well, and will, of course—must, of course—do all that he requires; but he does not know me, cannot love me, as you do;—and when he sees how much it grieves me, he will not, cannot separate us.'

Mrs. Seymour shook her head.

CHAPTER II.

Fanny Fairfax was the daughter of a gentleman who had made a large fortune in India. His wife had accompanied him to that country immediately on their marriage, and died at the expiration of five years, leaving him two children, a son and a daughter.

The two little infants were speedily sent off to England to be educated, and, at the request of Mrs. Fairfax, the little Fanny was consigned to the care and guardianship of Mrs. Seymour, accompanied by the earnest entreaty of the dying mother (her valued friend and schoolfellow) that she might on no account be sent to school, but educated with Mrs. Seymour's own children, and under her own eye. To this injunction Mrs. Seymour had most scrupulously adhered. She had watched over her little charge with the fond solicitude of a parent; and when death deprived her of two blooming daughters, her maternal affections were divided in nearly equal portions between the child of her friend and the only one now remaining to herself. It had pleased Heaven to afflict Edward Seymour from his childhood with one of life's heaviest calamities—the loss of sight; but, as if in compensation for so sad a deprivation, it had endowed him with every quality most calculated to secure the regard, esteem,

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and even affection of all who knew him. His cheerful, happy disposition was the admiration of all his associates, and the most sympathizing among them could scarcely recollect to pity one who ever wore a contented aspect, received them with a ready smile, and whose light, joyous laugh was the invariable herald of his approach. To see her son thus cheerful and happy, operated indeed as balm upon the wounded spirit of his devoted mother; but though grateful for the years during which such a state of things had continued, the anxious mother could not avoid looking forward, and feeling or fearing that this could not last—that a time would, must come, when feelings would arise that would awaken him to the painful consciousness of helpless inferiority to the rest of his species—of deficiencies not to be supplied—of a barrier insurmountable to the dearest wishes of his heart. That this time, so long dreaded, had now arrived, was poor Mrs. Seymour's firm conviction, and that her beloved son's hitherto happy spirits might not sink into hopeless despondency was the afflicted widow's fervent prayer.

I mentioned that Fanny Fairfax had had a brother. He was by three years her senior, and in him had centred all her father's hopes, views, and even affections. This son was to inherit his great wealth, to perpetuate his name, and, even at the early age when he had parted from him, he had evinced intelligence far beyond his tender years. This early promise of talent had been more than realized, and the fond father's expectations, his visions of parental pride, knew no bounds. Of the helpless female infant whom he had consigned to Mrs. Seymour's care he thought but little, and speculated less, satisfied that she was in good hands, and would be brought up as became her station in life. He cheerfully advanced a liberal allowance for her education, sent her ivory workboxes and Chinese fans, &c., at stated periods, and considered himself as thereby performing all that could be required of or expected from him. If he troubled himself with any consideration of her future prospects at all, he concluded that, as she was said to be handsome, she would marry suitably to her rank in life long before his return to his native land, and consequently never thought of her as likely to contribute in any way either to his happiness, or to what was with him synonymous, his importance. But alas for the plans, the projects, the hopes, and speculations of men! The idol of his father's heart, the object for whom he had toiled early and late, and for whose sake he still continued an exile from his country, after passing through college with almost unprecedented *éclat*, and becoming senior wrangler, &c., was seized with a brain fever, supposed to be brought on by his unwearied application and mental exertion, and carried off within so short a period of the termination of his academic course, that the same vessel which brought to his adoring parent the anxiously-looked-for account of his scholastic triumphs, brought also the stunning intelligence of his premature and melancholy death. Mr. Fairfax was really an object of pity, and his loss was even greater than he was capable of appreciating, for the poor young man's amiability of disposition was equal to his talents—he was gifted alike in the best qualities of mind and heart.

Not many months had passed since William Fairfax's death, and letters had been received from his afflicted father, written evidently under great despondency of mind, and announcing his intention of returning immediately to England.

Fanny had felt the loss of her brother very severely. He had passed the greater part of all his vacations at Mrs. Seymour's, and she was greatly attached to him—the more so, perhaps, that she had but few objects on which to bestow the affections of a naturally warm heart.

Mr. Fairfax's feelings towards his daughter were very materially affected by the death of his son. She now became his only object; she it was who must now be considered as his heiress, and the tone of his letters to her was far more affectionate than they had ever been. Though truly grateful for every increasing evidence of an interest so long and undeservedly withheld, poor Fanny could not bring herself to look forward to her father's return with any feeling of pleasure. She reproached herself in vain; she could neither reason nor scold herself into wishing for an event the approach of which filled her with anxiety and dread. To leave one who had been more than a mother to her, for one who had seemed to regard her so little, was a trial to which she hoped that she would not be subjected; but her fears overbalanced her hopes on the occasion, though she would not admit it to herself.

How much, how very much Fanny's happiness was involved in her continued residence under Mrs. Seymour's roof, had only been revealed to herself by the conversation with Charles Hargrave to which I before alluded. Charles Hargrave had been the favourite friend and college companion of William Fairfax; as such he had been introduced to Fanny, and she had found him truly deserving of her brother's esteem. His claims to her regard, indeed, had appeared to have increased since her brother's death, from his recollection of the friendship which united him to one so dear to her, and whom they almost equally mourned. Charles Hargrave had long loved her—almost from the commencement of their acquaintance, when she was only fifteen; her brother had been the confidant of his attachment, and had wished him success in his suit; but Charles was naturally shy and diffident, and would not now have had courage to avow his sentiments but for her late increased cordiality of manner, which, though arising from other causes than he fondly supposed, had perhaps naturally misled him, and also from his wish to secure her before the arrival of

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her father, and, as he feared, her consequent removal from his friend Mrs. Seymour's roof.

Many men might have been deterred from coming forward, in consequence of Fanny's present improved position; but Charles Hargrave was the eldest son of a man of large fortune. Money was no object to him; he felt that he had loved her when her pecuniary prospects were comparatively indifferent, and, however he might fear rejection, he did not fear misconstruction. It is not at one-and-twenty, thank Heaven, that we begin to be either suspicious ourselves, or apprehensive of being suspected by others, though I much fear that the happy confiding period does not extend much beyond that age. Poor Hargrave little imagined, when Fanny's unaffected surprise at his proposal, and equally unaffected though candid rejection of his suit, had deprived him of every ray of hope, that his successful rival in her affections was no other than the poor blind youth whose more than patient endurance at his severe calamity he had so often admired, but whose unfortunate situation prevented him from thinking of him for one moment as likely to make an impression on the heart of the lively and lovely Fanny. Had he imagined that such was the case, he would have regarded him with envy rather than pity. But woman's heart turns naturally to the helpless and afflicted, and it has been wisely ordained by Providence that those to whom care and kindness are most essential should possess the power of interesting the feelings and calling them forth.

It was Charles Hargrave's declaration that first revealed to Fanny the state of her heart, by showing to her how much dearer to her than even her lamented brother's attached friend was the companion of her infancy—he whose studies, recreations, and pleasures were all dependent upon her. From her earliest years she had been his self-elected guide, and, though naturally full of gaiety and spirits, she would at any time leave her young playmates at their games to accompany Edward in his rambles, happy in the amiable consciousness of being useful. Her father's approaching return from India tended doubly to depress her under her present feelings, and, independent of her regret for her poor brother, how gladly would she have resigned all the recently-acquired importance of her altered position, to be allowed to remain in the tranquil obscurity from which she feared that she was about to be removed! Even with her slight knowledge of human nature, she could not but feel that a man of her father's disposition was not unlikely to form projects for his only child, his heiress, differing but too widely from her own unambitious hopes and wishes; and she saw that Mrs. Seymour's apprehensions of her approaching departure nearly equalled her own. At Edward's feelings she could only guess, for he appeared studiously to avoid the subject of Mr. Fairfax's return.

Time rolled on, and Fanny became every day more anxious and nervous, and at length really ill. Mrs. Seymour at first attributed her indisposition to her unsettled state of mind and spirits; but after a few days it grew much more serious, and it was evident that her malady was the small-pox, of which there had been lately a few cases in a neighbouring village. Poor Mrs. Seymour's alarm was very great; she feared at first for Fanny's life, and when all the anxiety on that account was removed, it appeared but too likely that her beauty was gone for ever; and, to add to Mrs. Seymour's distress, Mr. Fairfax was daily expected, and she felt for the natural disappointment of the father on finding his once lovely daughter so different from what he had pictured to himself, so unlike what she had been described to him. To her great relief, however, a few days after Fanny was pronounced out of all danger, a letter arrived from Mr. Fairfax, announcing a change of plan;—he had no intention of leaving India *at present*—business had interfered, and it might be months, perhaps a twelvemonth, before he came to England. Here, then, was at least a reprieve; there was now no immediate prospect of separation, and they all felt grateful for it.

Mrs. Seymour's maternal anxieties, however, rather increased than diminished. Her son's state of mind during Fanny's illness confirmed every previous impression of his attachment to her; she could no longer delude herself upon that subject; it was too true; her worst fears were realized;—and what was to be the consequence! Had Fanny still been the neglected daughter of Mr. Fairfax, owing every blessing, every enjoyment of life to herself, her father might have been induced to allow her to marry according to her own wishes; but, vain and ambitious as he decidedly was, was it to be supposed that he would now allow his heiress, the only being for whose aggrandizement he could now scheme and speculate, to unite herself to one who, though possessed of a handsome independence, was condemned, from the unfortunate calamity under which he laboured, to comparative insignificance and obscurity? No! it was not to be expected, and she saw nothing but wretchedness in prospect for her afflicted son, and much misery for the generous girl whom she now really believed capable of devoting her life to him, if she were permitted to do so.

Fanny was now convalescent, though she had not yet left her room, and her spirits were still much affected, when Mrs. Seymour was sitting one morning with her son, who spoke more unreservedly of his feelings than he had ever done before. He had sat for some time in apparently gloomy abstraction, his fond parent regarding him with a sorrowful eye, when he suddenly exclaimed, 'I have been thinking, mother, that the postponement of Mr. Fairfax's arrival is, after all, a very questionable advantage.'

'Indeed!' said Mrs. Seymour, in unfeigned astonishment.

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'Yes,' he added, with a deep sigh; and, after a few moments' pause, 'that which must take place at last, had better, perhaps, not be delayed. You must know to what I allude; shall I—will *you*—feel more [reconciled to a separation from Fanny a twelvemonth hence than you are at present? I feel that *I* shall not—far from it; every day that passes will only render the parting more painful.' He again paused, and said, with much emotion, 'To you, my dear mother, I will confess my folly, my weakness. You will scarcely believe that, in my helpless, hopeless situation, I could have been mad enough to indulge in visions of happiness from which I ought to have felt that my calamity must ever cut me off;—that I, afflicted as I am, could have dreamed of attaching youth, beauty, and perfection of character, and of allying it to my worthless and monotonous existence. But the dream is over; I am painfully sensible that it is all a delusion; no woman—not even Fanny—could be capable of such a sacrifice as that of uniting her fate with such a helpless being as myself.'

'O do not say so,' exclaimed Mrs. Seymour involuntarily; 'do not doubt the disinterestedness of woman's affection;' then, seeing the tears in her poor son's mild but sightless eyes, she checked herself, fearing to encourage hopes to end in bitter disappointment, and instinctively turned from him to conceal the emotion which, alas! he could not have observed.

'In pity, dearest mother,' he answered, with much agitation, 'say not one word to assist my self-delusion; did you not tell me that Fanny is in dreadfully low spirits? doubtless it is the loss of her beauty she mourns; and can I have a greater proof that it is not my affection she values? May the Almighty restore it to her,' he added with much feeling, 'though it may be the means of separating us for ever, and of breaking my heart.'

'Nothing shall separate us if you wish me to remain with you,' exclaimed the agitated Fanny, who had just entered the room unobserved by Mrs. Seymour, and had been a speechless auditress of Edward's last few sentences.

'Good heavens, Fanny!' said Edward, starting up. 'Have you indeed heard me? O pity and forgive my folly and presumption.'

'I have nothing to forgive, Edward, but that you should suspect me of attaching importance to any advantage which you could not appreciate. Believe me the beauty which you could not see, I have never valued.'

'And are you, Fanny, really capable of uniting your fate to that of the helpless and blind?'

'Can you doubt me?' exclaimed the warm-hearted girl; 'is not your helplessness an additional claim on my affection? and oh! Edward, these eyes may be dim to others, but they appear not so to me; I see in them the light of true affection, and what more can I require?'

'My dearest girl!' exclaimed Mrs. Seymour, as she clasped her to her heart, and mingled her tears with those of her adopted daughter. Edward's heart was too full for speech.

CHAPTER III.

The evening was spent by the young people in the enjoyment of that sensation of relief which must necessarily follow the free indulgence of long suppressed feelings, and of the delightful security of mutual affection; but the uncertainty of obtaining Mr. Fairfax's consent to their union, the time which must necessarily elapse before it could possibly be procured, did not fail to gloom even the present by the apprehensions of the future, which could not but intrude.

Edward was, however, much the most sanguine; once convinced of Fanny's attachment, everything else seemed possible, if not probable—every difficulty appeared surmountable; and Mrs. Seymour was obliged, however painful the task, to endeavour to chill the hopes which she would fain have encouraged. It was agreed that Fanny should write immediately to her father explaining everything, reminding him of all she owed to Mrs. Seymour's maternal care and kindness, and entreating him to allow her to devote the remainder of her life to those to whom she was indebted for all the happiness she had yet experienced in this world.

Months of the most anxious and painful suspense passed away, and at length a packet arrived from Mr. Fairfax; Fanny seized it eagerly, but it fell from her hand; she had not power to break the seal; and when it was opened, her eyes glanced over the page for some moments before she could distinguish a letter. When able to read it, however, she found, to her inexpressible mortification and annoyance, that it was not the first reply to the letter which she had sent to ask his consent, but a letter written subsequently, and which referred to the decision contained in his former letter, without mentioning what that decision had been. That it was not favourable, however, seemed evident by his expressing his hopes that in pursuance of his wishes she was ere this preparing for her removal to London on a visit to a cousin of her father's, by whom he appeared to think she was expected. Poor Fanny's feelings and those of her lover may be imagined on reading this. Edward, having previously been the most sanguine, now gave all up for lost, and was in despair. Mrs. Seymour and Fanny derived a ray of comfort from the tone of his letter, which was affectionate, and spoke kindly of Mrs. Seymour. But still what could her removal to London augur, but the very worst? Nothing was to be done, however, but to wait in great anxi-

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ety, and with what patience they could summon, the arrival of the letter to which Mr. Fairfax referred, and which had doubtless been sent by some vessel detained unexpectedly. At the end of three long weeks it appeared; and, greatly to the relief of all parties, it was much more favourable than the last letter had led them to expect, although far from satisfactory to the lovers. Mr. Fairfax, though not angry at the turn which affairs had taken, was evidently very sorry for, and very much astonished at, his daughter's choice. He did not refuse his consent, but he withheld it for some time, in the hope, as he admitted, that it would not ultimately be required of him. He told his daughter that he must insist upon her entering into society, and seeing more of the world, before she determined upon 'making the sacrifice which she now meditated;' that he had written to his cousin, Mrs. Fairfax, in London, who he knew would undertake to chaperone her during the approaching winter and spring, and he trusted that at the expiration of that time she would have acquired juster notions, and views of life more in accordance with his own, and with the position which, as his daughter, she might hold in society.' Though in this letter there was much to distress, yet it did not destroy all hope; and coming as it did after one from which they had augured so unfavourably, it was received with thankfulness, and felt as a relief. The separation would indeed be a sad trial, but to that they must submit. The dreadful suspense was at all events over; they knew the worst. It was evident that Fanny had only to be constant and firm, and in time her father would yield.

Knowing Mr. Fairfax's character, Mrs. Seymour was very agreeably surprised at the mild, quiet tone of his letter; it was far more favourable than she had expected. A few days brought a letter from Mrs. Fairfax, with the anticipated invitation, and offers of service in chaperoning, &c. Poor Fanny burst into tears on receiving it, and with a heavy heart made all the necessary preparations for accepting it and complying in every respect with her father's wish; and as the time of her departure approached, as she was about to leave the friends of her youth, the happy home of her infant years to go among strangers, she felt as if she was taking leave of them for ever.

Perhaps, however, Edward was the most to be commiserated, for he must have felt that the attachment of his promised bride was destined to undergo a formidable trial. Young and lovely as she was, (for all traces of her late malady had completely disappeared,) he had every reason to believe that she had only to be seen to be admired; and he felt that she could not be known without being loved. She was going among scenes of gaiety and enjoyment but too likely to dazzle a youthful imagination, and was soon to be exposed to the insidious influence of flattery in its most attractive form. And did he doubt her? did he fear the contact of the gay and giddy world? No, he did not; and was his trust repaid? My female readers at least will believe that it was.

Though Fanny arrived in London fully convinced that she should derive pleasure from nothing that it contained, and never enjoy one moment's happiness until her return, she found that this was not quite the case. Her friends were kind and attentive, and the novelty, variety, and gaiety of London amusements produced their natural effect on an amiably and happily constituted mind. Society certainly wore its most attractive form to one who exhibited the combined claims of youth, beauty, and reputed wealth; and either as disinterested admirers of her personal charms, or interested worshippers of the *beaux yeux de sa cassette*, she had soon numerous adorers in her train. To imagine that at her early age she derived no gratification from the admiration that she so evidently excited, would be to suppose her endowed with a degree of sense which is, I fear, rarely possessed at a much more mature period; but she was wholly superior to the contemptible desire of gaining the hearts of others, when her own was no longer free; and no considerations of gratified vanity could at all console her for giving pain. She sought not to attract, but the lovely *heiress* must indeed have assumed a frigidity of demeanour very unsuited to Fanny's gracious nature, to have chilled some of those aspirants to her favour, whom the frowns of portionless beauty would have easily repelled.

Before the close of the season of Fanny's introduction to the mysteries of a London campaign, a letter arrived from her father, which completely accounted to Mrs. Seymour for the unexpectedly mild tenour of his objections to his daughter's matrimonial views, for it announced his own approaching marriage with a young and lovely girl, sister to a baronet, and grand-daughter to a peer.

To Fanny this intelligence, which, to many circumstanced as she was, would have been distressing in the extreme, was productive of the greatest gratification. She now felt convinced that she must soon sink into her former highly-prized insignificance, and that consequently she should find no difficulty in obtaining permission to bestow her hand where her inclinations pointed. She must now cease to be the first object with her father, and in all probability she would not long be his only child. She waited patiently until the end of the season, during which, to the inexpressible annoyance of Mrs. Fairfax, she refused several highly eligible offers, and then wrote to her father to assure him that having now followed his advice, mixed in society, and seen a little of the gay world, she was more than ever convinced that her notions of happiness were as inseparable from the quiet of a country life, as her affections were inalienable from the first object on whom they had been so deservedly bestowed, and she entreated him to give his

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consent to her marriage, now that her attachment had stood the required test. As she had hoped, the change in her father's own position had operated most favourably with regard to her wishes, and the following autumn saw her the happy and beloved bride of Edward Seymour.

M. S. A.

MEMORIES OF GIBRALTAR.

No. III.

Ceuta, anciently called 'Septa,' from its seven hills, is distant from Gibraltar about five leagues. Strabo calls it Abyla, and it is known as one of the pillars of Hercules. It commands the entrance to the Mediterranean on the African side, as Gibraltar does the European. It owes its corrupted name to the Arabs, and is celebrated as the seat of Count Julian's government, when, in revenge for his daughter Florinda's dishonour by Roderick, he betrayed his country into the hands of his neighbour, Muza the Saracen. Here it was that the remains of that heartbroken girl were interred, after her self-immolation at Malaga, where, to the grief and consternation of her parents, she threw herself headlong from a tower, and so ended the sufferings that had unsettled her reason.

Here her young brother, the last of Julian's proud and noble race, was treacherously cast into the sea by the identical Moors admitted by his father. Here their majestic and royally-descended mother was inhumanly murdered; and the curious antiquarian may still find remains of the ancient citadel which she so gallantly defended in her last struggle to protect her boy; and over the gates leading into Barbary, when I visited Ceuta, still hung the iron cages which held the skulls of the rebel nobles, sacrificed by those whom they had plotted to enrich.

The fortified walls which separate the fortress from the Moorish frontiers are not inferior to some of the bomb-proof batteries of Gibraltar; and during the period when the place was nominally in possession of England, the citadel was garrisoned by a British force, and presented a very formidable defence to the Mediterranean entrance.

The civil government was, however, during that time under the national dominion, and being the penal settlement for Spain, Spanish troops were likewise stationed there, under the command of their own governor; but the discipline was so relaxed, that I saw him perform a day's duty as a private soldier, taking his regular course as a sentry; for the purpose, as he explained, of exciting the men to emulate his example.

The streets of Ceuta are ill-paved and narrow. The residences are commodious, but generally inaccessible to the approach of a carriage, a circumstance (be it remarked,) far less embarrassing under those ever-smiling skies, than it would be likely to prove in our cold-catching climate.

The houses have all a monastic, or rather prison-like appearance, their windows being strongly grated with iron bars, but from their balconies peep beautiful brunettes, with eyes that would pierce a coat of mail.

There are in the town two Spanish churches, one celebrated for some remarkable specimens of Mosaic. In the other I remember to have been startled by a most appalling painting of the Entombment; the monk who acted cicerone appeared to appreciate it highly, but at that time my taste was too unformed to permit me to pronounce upon its merits. There is also a monastery, the monks of which are celebrated for the exquisite manufacture of shell and feather-flowers.

The district which covers the hillocks exterior to the town is the most agreeable, every house being furnished with its own grapery and garden, abounding with oranges, lemons, pomegranates, and melons; each has also its own fountain, or well of the purest water; in this respect the town is well supplied, as the public cisterns are said to be capable of containing a reserve sufficient for two years' consumption.

At the period I write of, one division of our regiment was stationed at Gibraltar, the other at the citadel of Ceuta, under the command of a general officer, whom, for the sake of avoiding identification, I shall call St. Clair; and as my little record involves the adventures of friends, I shall disguise other names, in order that the scenes which I depict may cause no embarrassment to such of the party as still survive our trip. Alas! too many of those who might recognize resemblances of character are now numbered with the dead.

My friend Sophia was the young and ill-assorted bride of Colonel Macgregor, who boasted a genealogical tree that might have rivalled the royal oak; he was proud of his family, his name, his fortune, and of his girl-wife; not that he was capable of appreciating the higher qualities of her nature, but because upon his arrival from the Peninsula, he found her the reigning belle of the garrison, which determined him, *nem. con.*, to make the prize his own.

Sophia was in the earliest blush of girlhood, and had she been a resident of her father-land, proposals of such a nature would have been deemed preposterous; but in more southern countries such early marriages are by no means uncommon. It may be imagined that love, beyond that which she bore to her parents, was known to her only by name; and when she acceded to their commands, it was without one feeling beyond duty, assisted by the youthful ambition to become the mistress of her own establishment, and to participate the honours and advantages, commanded as much by the colonel's stylish pretensions as by his rank and fortune.

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The sudden transition, however, by which Juliet is made to pass in a few hours from childlike simplicity to the passionate depths of woman's nature, and to the perfection of intellect, was scarcely more rapid than the transformation which marriage wrought in my friend Sophia. That which in some minds is a process of tedious accomplishment, seemed in her to have been effected in a few weeks.

If a symptom of girlhood remained, it consisted in the gay and buoyant spirit gushing out in frank and sometimes dangerous irony; this she was flattered into indulging, until sometimes it fell irreverently even upon the colonel himself; but, to do her justice, this fault was one of thoughtlessness, not ill-nature; for she had a heart teeming with philanthropic kindness; and, if it *were* a fault, it might be pardoned, for it was soon corrected, as the events of our VISIT TO CEUTA left her as sedate and self-possessed a woman of the world as though she had been ten years wedded—so sanative are the lessons that we read in our own hearts.

Sophia and myself were early friends, of one age, had grown together, and married nearly at the same period into the same regiment; and when General St. Clair came to Gibraltar upon his half-yearly inspection, he invited our matrimonial quartette to visit his lady at Ceuta, and the anticipations with which we contemplated our excursion formed the sole occupation of our conversation and thoughts until our departure.

It had been arranged that we should accompany the surgeon of our regiment, who was to follow the general in a few days, and by special favour our kind old governor gave us the use of his yacht, so that we left the garrison in gallant style; but as we stood on the deck of our little vessel, looking up at the gloomy tower which frowns over the harbour, and which then enclosed a mysterious state-prisoner most jealously guarded, most of our gay expectations were chased by certain misgivings as to the impressions we might chance to make upon our destined hostess, who, besides being the presiding deity of the place, was a personage of prodigious regimental importance, and was in that little circle celebrated by a thousand piquant anecdotes, all calculated to excite the curiosity, if not the apprehensions, of youthful guests. As if purposely to increase these nervous trepidations, scarcely was the anchor aground before an express arrived alongside, to request that Dr. Smith would conduct the visitors to the house of the general's aide-de-camp, a command which seemed so out of course, that I believe, had it not been for the more wary judgment of the colonel, we certainly should have returned without landing; it was fortunate, however, that his national characteristic guided our inexperience, as it afterwards proved that our transfer was only for two nights, owing to Mrs. St. Clair's preparation for a grand ball.

The gentlemen of our party, like good soldiers, having decided upon obedience, and night, which in these latitudes falls in a few moments, having come suddenly upon us, we were forced to submit in silence to our destiny, and following the doctor, who enjoyed the reputation of standing high in court favour, through sundry dark and winding alleys, we soon arrived at our destination, where, finding the hall-door open, we entered unannounced; but scarcely had we passed the threshold before a female voice saluted us in a broad northern accent.

'Wha's there, Jenny? Is it ye, Jenny?'

'Tis I, Mrs. Douglas,' responded our conductor.

'What, Smith? come up here—I'm brae glad to see ye back again, mon. Laws a mercy! Macgregor! I beg pardon—ye hae gotten the step since I saw ye, *Colonel Macgregor;* troth, then, I'm glad to see ye, and the leddies too; but ye're amaist like sisters—baith brides, I ken. But which am I to ca' Mistress *Colonel Macgregor?*' Then turning suddenly to the colonel with a bantering air, she added, 'Hoot awa, I always set ye down on the old bachelors' list.'

Now every one knows that most men have their antipathies; but what are cats, rats, squinting women, creaking paper, or even tight shoes, to the antipathy of an ancient bon-vivant to being reminded of his place amongst the antediluvian fraternity, three months after marriage with a reigning belle? Conscious that he had passed the uncertainty of a certain age, and testily tenacious of personal freedom, the colonel, bowing coldly, presented his wife.

'Ye're welcome to Ceuta, leddies, troth are ye—weel, weel, gin ye waited lang, colonel, ye hae got a bonny bride at last.' Macgregor winced. 'But come, lads, there's wine;' and she unceremoniously heaped the table with refreshments.

'Make yersels comfortable—Mistress St. Clair will be wi' us shortly. The leddies must put on their best looks, for the honour of the regiment. It's the general that has a kind heart, and its Mistress St. Clair that's sae elegant and magnanimous.'

It was thus made pretty evident to our comprehension, that however we might be disposed to regard our general's wife as high priestess, she was worshipped by our worthy and outspoken entertainer as the voice of the oracle itself. This deference, however, was quite excusable, as Mrs. Douglas was a person who had raised herself from a very humble station, mainly through the force of her own benevolent nature.

We were not held long in suspense, for scarcely had we re-entered the drawing-room after the arrangement of our attire, before a loud and authoritative knocking at the hall-door announced visitors of no common importance. Mrs. Douglas started to her feet, the gentlemen broke off their conversation, the piercing screams of children issuing from the nursery ceased, the dog in the court gave loud warning, and the cat that lay snugly on the rug, enjoying the ge-

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nial warmth of a cheerful fire, rose with dignity, stretched herself lazily into the form of an arch, and took refuge under her mistress's chair.

'It is Mistress St Clair,' whispered our hostess, and hurried from the room. Presently a loud masculine voice was heard. 'Well, and where are they? What are they doing?' We simultaneously rose as a tall bony woman, habited *en militaire*, in a close braided dress and regimental forage-cap, strode into the room, followed by Captain Douglas, and a posse of young officers, and roughly shaking the colonel by the hand, vowed, almost swore, that she was glad to see him. Upon Dr. Smith she bestowed the embrace Espagnole, greatly to the amusement of her attendants, who grouped giggling behind, and no less to our edification; at last she turned to us, and having graciously signified her approval of the choice made by our worthy lords and masters, and felicitated us upon arriving in time to be present at her ball of the ensuing evening, she enjoined us to consider ourselves '*entirely at her command*,' and informed us, that although she used the house of the obliging aide-de-camp as our temporary quarters, she considered herself as the arbitress of our movements during our visit. All these preliminaries being satisfactorily settled, without more ado she took her seat at the card-table, and was soon deeply lost in the anxieties of lansquenette.

It having been signified to us that a visit to the Spanish governor and his lady was indispensable, early the next morning we set out to pay our respects. The government-house overlooks the bay, and is built in the usual way, with a large courtyard in the centre. At the entrance lounged two lazy sentinels, and on the staircase lolled others, playing cards. Having passed these watchful guardians of official dignity, we found ourselves at the entrance of a suite of apartments, forming one side of the quadrangle, the scanty and mean furniture of which, uncarpeted brick floors, and uncurtained windows, strongly contrasted with the comforts of the government residence at Gibraltar. One apartment alone was exempt from the desolation which chilled us in the rest; here the floor was covered with a fine mat dyed in brilliant colours, rose-coloured silk draperies floated round the windows, and the furniture of Brazilian wood was light and elegant. This we also passed, and, conducted by Captain Douglas, were admitted into a boudoir of most tiny dimensions, where, in a dishabille perfectly inconceivable to English beaux and belles, we found the governor and his donna in conversation with their confessor; but whatever was wanting in costume was amply compensated by the graceful urbanity and unembarrassed ease with which we were received and entertained; and an hour's sprightly conversation sufficed to place us all on a footing of intimacy at the government-house, and served to convince us that beauty is not requisite to render a woman agreeable, for perhaps few possessed so plain a face, and yet fewer a more fascinating manner than the gobernordora of Ceuta.

* * * *

Perhaps it was secret vanity that induced my friend to delay her entrance into the ball-room until the guests were all assembled; and as, both by the precedence of rank and bridal honours, the duty of leading the dance devolved upon her, Mrs. St. Clair was thrown into considerable dudgeon by this coquetry; but when she entered, dressed with the most elaborate attention to English rules of taste, and looking the very queen of smiles, that lady could not but feel proud of her countrywoman; forgetting, therefore, her displeasure, and hurrying her to the head of the room without having been introduced to a single individual, Sophia found herself in a moment whirling through all the intricate mazes of a Spanish dance; but long before she had completed the figure, she became aware of being the object of general attention, and when she found herself undergoing the process of individual introduction, made doubly irksome by the embraces superadded by Spanish etiquette, she was not sorry to be relieved by the gobernordora, who now, sparkling with jewels, claimed her acquaintance.

'I wish,' said she, 'especially to bespeak your friendship for a young relative of mine,' and added more confidentially, 'who may require your kindness.'

As she spoke she led Sophia to another apartment, where, in seemingly earnest conversation with one of our officers, sat a young girl, whose voluptuous person, dark eyes, now languishing in liquid light, now sparkling with vivacity, jetty hair, white teeth, and clear brown complexion, presented a perfect specimen of Spanish beauty.

Patrisinia Vialli received Sophia's compliments with the most ingenuous grace, kissing her on each cheek after the manner of her country, while Captain Westron, looking as though he wished the intruders at the antipodes, arose, and offering his arm to the gobernordora, with her left the room.

'Mercy, how tired I am!' exclaimed Sophia, sinking on the seat which had been so hastily vacated. 'I have undergone a round of salutations that would have wearied twenty prudes, and flatteries of all kinds have been showered so thickly upon me, that had it not been for the gobernordora's charitable extrication, I should have expired under the load. Your countrywomen, my dear, have criticized each article of dress, from my feathers to my shoes; my English corsets were a theme of supereminent admiration, while their astonishment at my fortitude in submitting to be strait-laced exceeds all bounds; in short, they have twisted me about like a humming-top, and squeezed me until I have lost all sense of feeling.'

'This admiration, signora, should convince you of their good-nature,' laughingly replied Patrisinia.

'Do not suppose that I am displeased,' said

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Sophia, 'for we easily forgive the inconvenience of being too much commended.'

'You are a happy woman, signora,' returned her companion, with a scarcely perceptible sigh.

'Am I! then the merit is entirely my own.'

'Possessed of beauty, rank, and riches, how could you be otherwise!'

'Beauty is a compendious word, signoretta; a single good feature not unfrequently suffices to elevate a woman into a popular idol, especially if aided by wealth or position.'

'Then again,' added Patrisinia, 'what a fortunate fate, united to the man of your choice, the object of your fond affections!'

'The one worshipper,' pursued Sophia, 'selected from all to idolize me in my hours of mirth, and shed tear for tear in those of my affliction; is not that a pretty picture?'

The Spanish girl nodded.

'I think so too; but unfortunately, my dear girl, it is like all pictures, *unreal*.'

'*Unreal!*'

'Yes! the theory of marriage is extremely beautiful, but the practice is, I assure you, *tout au contraire*.'

'You astonish me!' exclaimed Patrisinia.

'And Colonel Macgregor would be equally astonished if he heard you accuse him of the inconceivable barbarity of being in love with his wife.'

'And is it possible that he is not?'

'Your notions,' went on Sophia, 'are so exceedingly charming and natural, that it is almost a pity to spoil them; however, *there* is Colonel Macgregor: do you think he looks like the very interesting person you have been so prettily imagining?'

Now as there are certain feminine prejudices against diminutive stature, red hair, white eyes minus eyebrows, and a complexion where the rose blushes on the nose instead of the cheek, it must be confessed that the colonel did not come up to the beau idéal of an Adonis in any one's opinion excepting his own, and the contiguity in which he was placed, beside a very majestic and remarkably handsome Spaniard, did not contribute to the éclat of his appearance; the look, therefore, with which Patrisinia scanned him, was perfectly intelligible to her companion, who, as though the opinion had been expressed in words, went on in her rattlingway.

'No, no—give us English credit for more common sense than romance. The colonel selected me to please his vanity, and I took him to please those I loved more than all the world. He has no pride so great as seeing his wife an object of admiration, and considers the honour of his name as a receipt in full for personal attentions; and I am so amiably acquiescent to his views, that I never trouble my head about the goddess at whose shrine he may chance to pay his temporary devotions.'

'And you are yet a bride?'

'Lud, child, I have been married three whole months; and you have no idea how much knowledge a sagacious person may acquire within that period of married life.'

'And is the colonel never jealous?'

Sophia laughed. 'No! that would be too amusing.'

'Yet flattery is dangerous.'

'It may be to those who seldom hear it; but when constantly buzzed in one's ears, it loses its influence.'

'And you are really happy?'

'If you mean contented, yes; but as to that exquisite bliss which young ladies so religiously believe necessarily to belong to marriage, I must confess that I have found no cause to become a proselyte to their faith.'

'I have been taught to think that marriage without love must be misery,' said Patrisinia.

'A mere girlish fallacy,' pursued Sophia, with a most matronly air; 'and if I might offer the results of my own observations, I should pronounce love to be rather destructive to the comforts of wedlock.'

'You have uttered an enigma.'

'Love,' said Sophia, 'has a thousand fears, jealousies, and caprices; it wastes its energies in petty contentions, and destroys its boasted bliss by endless anxieties. The life of a woman who loves is one series of continued disappointments. She enters marriage with all her expectations raised, all her enthusiastic hopes awakened; she lavishes on her idol all the treasures of her heart, and naturally expects to receive a correspondent return. He, meanwhile, who as the lover had been all devotion, as the husband becomes all apathetic. Like the sportsman, whose ardour is sustained by the enterprise of the chase, he becomes listless and inert when the prize is won; and she, looking vainly for those delicate attentions which he had taught her to appreciate, grows surprised and shocked at finding them nearly all withdrawn. She consults her glass, and finds the beauty he extolled still bright as before; she examines her heart, it is full of affection; and when each hourly action is subjected to a critical scrutiny, they prove to be so many indices of that voluminous record which registers her thoughts. Bewildered and wretched, she weeps in secret over her lost happiness, nor dreams of looking into the metaphysics of nature for the solution of her difficult problem. Thus she becomes fretful, perhaps perverse; while he, provoked, abjures the tiny god, yet, with admirable inconsistency, demands from her increasing testimonies of affection, even though he find their exhibition wearisome. He demonstrates his power by groundless jealousies, construes her silence into coldness, her eagerness for his society into an attack upon his liberty, and, rather than yield an iota of those boasted rights which are unassailed except by the nervous fears of the sensitive despot, he rushes to dissipation for which he has no taste, and leaves the wife of his bosom to a solitude of tears. Perhaps time and the meekness of submission may rend away the chains that bind his reason captive; he returns in penitence to his victim; but, alas!

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she has learned to doubt him in whom she had confided, to fear him who was her idol. He then becomes sensible of the change, and finds that forgiveness is a poor substitute for affection, and fruitlessly mourns over the withered heart whose brightest blossoms his cruelty has blighted.'

'Really,' said Patrisinia, 'you argue most learnedly for one who is ignorant of the passion.'

'I had a friend,' replied Sophia, somewhat mournfully, 'who was its victim, and I had the misfortune to be introduced into society when I ought to have been working tent-stitch in the nursery. But pray let us waive these gloomy topics—only take my advice, marry a husband for whom you feel a comfortable indifference, and let the little petted urchin go to Jericho! You will be happier without than with him, depend upon it.'

'If your code be true, it is well worth consideration,' said Patrisinia.

'Still,' replied Sophia archly, 'I fancy that yonder Irish hero, who watches us so impatiently, will contrive to efface every word of my lecture before the end of the hour. But remember, men are sad deceivers! That is the first lesson that meets our ears, but it is the last that we will condescend to learn by heart. Our self-love prompts us to believe that we have a right of exemption from the misfortunes that befall the rest of the world, and we constantly expect that a miracle will be wrought for our particular advantage. But here comes my liege lord, and smiling as though he were still a lover.'

'I could not endure my husband to be less than a lover,' said Patrisinia.

'National prejudices,' whispered Sophia, as the gentlemen advanced. 'Your countrymen are equally ready to serenade a mistress or stiletto a rival; now mine are, nine times out of ten, either mere humdrums, who care nothing about the matter, or else fashionable gallants, who pique themselves upon a wife's beauty as they would upon that of their horse, and are equally flattered by the commendation of either.'

'Permit me to present Don Pedro Valdigo, governor of Seville, to the fair Englishwoman whose charms he pronounces to be irresistible,' said the colonel; 'I have promised to use my influence for the next set.' Sophia curtseyed assent, whilst her eyes sank abashed before the ardent gaze that was rivetted upon her. The colonel contemplated her blushing face with a self-satisfied air, and, erecting his figure to about five feet nothing for a grand climax, turned to his companion—'Don Pedro. I have *great* pleasure in introducing you to *Mrs. Macgregor!*'

The Spaniard started, a flush crossed his cheek, a sudden frown shaded his brow, and, looking rapidly from one to the other, he nearly dropped the hand that had been placed in his own.

The colonel had produced an effect, but the pleasure of the jest was entirely confined to himself.

Don Pedro that day had arrived at Ceuta on a visit to the government-house, and having been greatly excited by the gobernordora's praises of the beautiful Englishwoman, his first object on entering the ball-room was to secure an introduction. Accident led him into conversation with Macgregor, and, little suspecting that he was speaking with the husband of the lady, he poured forth his admiration, by which the colonel's vanity was so flattered, that he did not hesitate to carry on the jest until the moment of introduction.

There is in woman an intuitive perception, which distinguishes at a glance the nature of the sentiment which she inspires, and it is only when her own heart becomes attached that love binds his fillet over the eyes of her discernment; so, though her husband failed to discover more than ordinary gallantry in the avowals of Don Pedro, she, more learned, shrank before the lustrous look that rested so passionately upon her.

Soon recovering from his momentary confusion, the Spaniard uttered a hasty apology to the colonel for the freedom of his remarks, and then led his partner to the ball-room; neither, however, attempted for some moments to break a silence more dangerous than speech. Sophia felt it to be impossible; Don Pedro, perhaps for the first time in his life, found it difficult, and, when he did speak, his voice trembled.

'Will Mrs. Macgregor condescend to pardon an involuntary error?'

'I were indeed to blame,' said Sophia, endeavouring to rally, 'to deem that offensive which is intended to compliment.'

'It were as impossible to compliment you, donna, as it were unwise to betray the sentiment which you inspire.'

'Cease to tax your gallantry,' replied Sophia, resuming her usual playful manner, 'for I promise you that I shall not accord any attention, until you find some other theme for conversation.'

They now joined the dancers, and Sophia found ample occupation in dispensing smiles and brief words among her new acquaintances, but ever as she turned to her partner, the expression of his look became too eloquent to be misunderstood. She was fond of conquest, but it was the conquest of the hour, not the wreck of the heart's peace, that she delighted in, and the tale she now read was one that gave her sorrow.

Suddenly the dance ceased, a rumour rose, and then came a sad account of poor Doctor Smith;—he who but the previous evening had landed with us so full of activity and health, and who had been so conspicuously welcomed by Mrs. St. Clair, had fallen while preparing for the ball, and was soon after found dead. On receiving the intelligence, Mrs. St. Clair had retired into an adjoining room, whither Sophia's considerate partner hastily conducted her, on perceiving the deadly paleness that overspread her countenance on being made acquainted with the lamentable catastrophe. They

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there found Mrs. St. Clair affectedly leaning on the shoulder of Colonel Macgregor, receiving the condolence of a group of her special favourites; and when Sophia advanced towards her, she exclaimed in a stentorian tone, 'So! Mrs. Macgregor, half dead I see! Is it not shocking? Horrible! frightful! Are they dancing in the next room? My ball will be completely spoiled! —a total failure! Did you ever know such a barbarism? I'll never forgive him!—never! Don't dance with him, Mrs. Macgregor —pray don't.'

'With whom, madam?' asked Sophia, completely mystified.

'With that wild man of the woods, Herbert. Was I not in the most charming spirits imaginable, when, like a raven, he came croaking his tale of death into my ears, and put all to flight. Every one knows my regard for poor dear Doctor Smith; but what service could it render him to destroy my cheerfulness by telling me of his death? I could not bring him to life again—and why spoil my ball?'

A change came over Sophia's spirit; she felt sick almost to fainting. 'And such,' thought she, 'is the world's attachment—that world for which I have sacrificed myself!'

'Come,' said Mrs. St. Clair; 'Don Pedro will take care of Mrs. Macgregor; do you, gentlemen, assist me in restoring the gaiety of my guests.'

'With your permission,' said Sophia, 'I will remain here for the present; the colonel will, I dare say, give me his company.'

'Impossible, my dear Sophia!' replied the colonel, curveting after the general's lady; 'I am engaged, and would not on any account interfere with the duties of your partner;' and with a smirk, and a nod to the don, he left the room.

Sophia looked after him in momentary vexation; her companion stood with folded arms attentively regarding her, and, on perceiving a smile re-appear, he seated himself near her.

'And so, donna, your husband permits me the privilege you would have ungenerously refused.'

'Which entitles you to my hand for another dance. Yet I must beg you to release me from the engagement. Seek another partner,' said Sophia, purposely misunderstanding him.

'The charms of your conversation exceed the pleasures of the dance, and should not be denied me, since sanctioned by the colonel, by whose decree I remain your shadow.'

'Methinks my *own* consent might be consulted,' said Sophia.

'That were a boon indeed;—say that you accord it, donna, and I will endeavour to deserve it. Show me but the way—nay,' he added, changing his earnest into a lighter tone, 'I will not be denied, and on this I swear allegiance, so I may be admitted your faithful cavalier.' As he spoke, his hand touched hers, which rested on a chair; but, finding that she proudly withdrew it, he caught from her grasp the bouquet it enclosed, and pressed it to his lips, adding, 'this, at least, I will for ever preserve, as a remembrance of this moment's happiness.'

'See,' remarked Sophia, 'the roses fade, fit emblem of the vow they bear.'

'Donna, you do not think so,' said the Spaniard seriously.

Predetermined as Don Pedro appeared to be to monopolize the society of my friend, she had found means to escape him, and we were whisperingly conferring together when Macgregor, passing us hastily, as the company were bustling towards the supper-room, found himself suddenly arrested.

'Upon my word, colonel,' said Sophia, 'I am greatly obliged for your generous *carte blanche* respecting the attentions and adulations of others, but I think it were as well if you exhibited some portion of your conspicuous gallantry towards your wife.'

'Sophy jealous?' asked the surprised husband.

'Of your honour, sir,' replied Sophia, 'which it appears is better guarded by my rectitude than by your vigilance.'

'I trust, madam,' gravely said the colonel, 'that there is no danger of your falling into the very vulgar notion of attaching importance to every common-place compliment that is paid to your attractions. I should be deeply mortified indeed to find that you had enrolled yourself amongst those violently virtuous ladies who pass their lives in Quixotising against imaginary assailants.'

'The breath of flattery,' proudly retorted his wife, 'passes as idly into my ear as it does from your lip.'

'If so,' returned he, 'there is no need for my exposing myself to the risk of being lampooned as a jealous husband, by dancing attendance upon my own wife.'

'Colonel,' said Sophia impressively, 'let no such trifling fears expose that which you ought to value to real danger; be assured that I am not wholly heartless, and if among the idle crowd one tone of genuine tenderness should be breathed, perchance it might awaken a responsive chord in my bosom; then blame yourself if you are not ready to win me back to duty.'

Macgregor viewed himself in the mirror, and laughed incredulously, bade her secure her conquests, and assuring her that he should only consider them as so many proofs of his good taste and fortune, passed on.

Sophia sighed as he left her, but coloured deeply when she perceived that Don Pedro was by her side, and must have heard their conversation. She felt that she had unequivocally betrayed her fear of his acquiring an undue influence, and, if feared, why? A secret monitor within responded to the question. The Spaniard had been dull indeed if not conscious of his advantage: he took her hand without a word, and led her to the supper-room.

Not even a look was exchanged between

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them, yet each felt that the conventions of society were broken down, and that the occult mysteries of their hearts were revealed. Before the party separated, however, Don Pedro's new-born affection had to struggle with one terrible apprehension, which was awakened by overhearing a whispered request from Captain Westron for a private conference, followed by a quick appointment to escort her to the beach the following day, whither she was to accompany a party to gather shells. The national suspicion of the Spaniard was on the alert. Had his self-love deceived him? Was Westron, after all, the hero of her alarms?—and he could not help hazarding to her the remark that the captain was a happy man.

'I believe he is about to confide to my friendship a secret that he deems of some importance,' said Sophia; 'and I promise you that I shall not betray my trust.'

Don Pedro scrutinized her countenance doubtingly—it was guileless as a child's, and when she smiled adieu, he retired from her presence, convinced that the world held not another being so worthy of his homage. Alas! he forgot the sacred decree that forbade the offering.

* * * * *

'And now for the secret, the great important secret,' said Sophia to Captain Westron, as, true to her appointment, she stepped upon the battery from which they were to descend to the beach. 'There are no listeners here to tell tales, so don't keep me in suspense.'

'Well then, madam,' said Westron, colouring, 'in one word, I am in love.'

'Lud a mercy! is that all? I'll wager a pair of gloves that every man in the garrison between the ages of sixteen and sixty will plead guilty to the same misdemeanour. For pity's sake, don't call that a secret.'

'Pray don't laugh, madam; mine is a more serious case than you imagine,' pleaded Westron.

'Promise me a little adventure, and I'll listen to your confession with the gravity of a judge and the secresy of a duenna; for I am certain that with the aid of those iron-barred birdcages yonder, we shall be able to concoct as pretty a little romance as ever provoked the appetite of the novel-loving public.'

'Those iron bars are the devil,' ejaculated Westron.

'So, so, my friend, it is as I suspected; an elopement, in which, while I enact the confidante, Patrisinia Vialli is to perform the heroine.'

'Exactly; but how, my dear Mrs. Macgregor, *could* you have discovered what has never been confided to any one?'

'There's an old adage about lookers-on seeing more of the game than those who play. That is my case. But, sincerely, where exists your difficulty?'

'Her uncle, by whom she has been educated, is a priest, and rejects me, partly because of my religion, and partly because, since childhood, she has been betrothed to a man of superior rank and fortune.'

'In that case,' said Sophia, 'you may depend upon my best assistance.'

'A thousand thanks,' replied her companion; 'you have conferred on me an inestimable obligation. By your assistance I trust we shall be able to escape to Gibraltar; once there and our union completed, the governor will protect my wife. But were we to be discovered prior to that event, Patrisinia would be consigned to a convent, or to a fate she yet more dreads, a marriage with Don Pedro, the governor of Seville.'

'With Don Pedro?' exclaimed Sophia, greatly startled.

'The same.'

'You have a most dangerous rival,' she continued, thoughtfully.

'I place every confidence in Patrisinia's affections.'

'And how will Don Pedro endure this interruption to his wooing?'

'What his feelings on the subject may be, it is not my province to inquire; they are not, however, supposed to be very ardent.'

'I hope not; for I must confess that it would deeply grieve me were I in any way instrumental to his unhappiness,' said Sophia, as she prepared to follow her conductor, who had descended a few steps to seek a safe pathway down the rocks, when a voice from behind pronounced the single word 'Remember!' It was Don Pedro, who, putting his finger to his lip to intimate the necessity of silence, disappeared, leaving on Sophia's mind the disagreeable conviction that he participated their secret; a participation which might be equally fatal to the lovers, if imparted or concealed. Trusting, therefore, solely to future circumstances to direct her in the difficult part she had undertaken, and endeavouring to banish every appearance of embarrassment, lest the captain should construe it into an indication of a repented promise, she quickened her steps, and soon joined the shell-seekers who had already assembled, but whose eager acquisition of marine treasures left them little time to comment upon the new comers.

In a round of gaiety several days elapsed without any plan being arranged for the flight of the lovers, and as every day brought some new proof of the Spaniard's devotion to my friend, she found her position increasingly delicate. In this emergency she determined to confide the fact of Don Pedro's acquaintance with their project to Patrisinia herself; leaving her to determine how his interference with their plot could be most easily prevented. Accordingly, taking advantage of an evening when the gentlemen were all engaged at a grand mess dinner, we sallied forth to visit our young Spanish friend; and when we were turning from the court-yard into the gallery leading to the signoretta's apartments, a tall man closely enveloped in his cloak, and wearing his sombrero deeply slouched over his brows brushed quickly past us. We should have scarce-

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ly noticed so common a circumstance, but for the sudden stop and deep reverence which he made, upon recognizing the persons whom he had so unceremoniously encountered. That action, notwithstanding his mysterious muffling, betrayed the graceful Don Pedro, and accordingly we found Patrisinia in a most pitiable state of agitation; the quondam lover having just formally released her from her engagement, with a stern recommendation to correct her views respecting Captain Westron, whose intentions, he warned her in time, were not likely to be effected, and whose failure might consign her to a fate even more unfortunate than that of becoming his wife. With this cold sarcasm on his lips he departed, leaving his astonished hearer a prey to the most bitter apprehensions, which were destined to be still more heightened by the communication of my friend.

Throwing herself upon Sophia's bosom, she conjured her so piteously personally to plead her cause with the Don, and seemed so completely helpless, and dependent upon the good offices which she invoked, that my friend was compelled, 'contrary to her better judgment,' to accede to the task of securing his Excellency's silence. To this promise she was the rather urged, since it was impossible for her to confide to any one except myself the true cause of her wishing to evade using her influence with Don Pedro.

Patrisinia was, however, so deeply impressed with the irresistible power of Sophia's eloquence, that having secured her promise, she passed from a state of absolute *abandon* to one of perfect elation, which good office being accomplished, we set out on our return home, where we were surprised to find a group of officers, 'all more or less elevated,' busily engaged in removing from a sort of bier an apparently lifeless body; we stopped and gazed at the group with consternation, and as the body was raised by the soldiers, we heard one exclaim, 'Fairly done up, by Jupiter!' 'Settled at last,' responded another; and then the military cap of the insensible falling to the ground, we recognized the features of Colonel Macgregor.

'O my husband! he is dead! he is murdered!' shrieked Sophia, darting wildly forward, and would have fallen to the earth, but rapid as light, a man sprang from the shadow of the archway, and caught her in his arms—it was Don Pedro!

The boisterous party stared in stupid astonishment; but, before they could recover themselves, he had borne her up stairs to the apartment where sat Mrs. St. Clair and Mrs. Douglas at cribbage. 'Guid guide us, what's the matter wi' the puir thing?' exclaimed Mrs. Douglas, starting from her chair, whilst Don Pedro laid his burden on the sofa.

'What may be the meaning of this scene?' inquired Mrs. St. Clair, who, for some reason best known to herself, had latterly exhibited considerable rancour towards Sophia. The Spaniard was too much absorbed to hear her. 'May I beg the favour of a reply? I am not accustomed to incivility, especially in my own house;' pursued Mrs. St. Clair, highly piqued.

He looked vacantly round, then in a tone that betrayed irrepressible agitation, answered, that 'he believed Colonel Macgregor was dead,—or drunk,' he added, in a low contemptuous whisper.

Mrs. St. Clair shrugged her shoulders and left the room as if to satisfy her curiosity: Mrs. Douglas ran for a restorative, whilst I was busily engaged in using the best means I could think of to restore the sense of my friend. Don Pedro pressed her cold hands passionately to his lips, and reposed her languid head upon his shoulder. She breathed, but so faintly that it would not have stirred the down of the thistle; twice he bent down as if to steal that soft breath from her lips, but each time drew back, as though respect forbade the freedom that love dictated; but as the current of life began to flow through her frame, his heart beat more wildly, and straining her fondly to his breast, he rivetted his eyes upon her countenance, and whispered in her scarcely conscious ears vows of imperishable devotion.

Approaching footsteps and loud voices on the stairs at last recalled him to recollection; and the next instant Mrs. Douglas entered with a whole cargo of smelling-bottles. 'The ne'er-do-weel chiels,' she exclaimed, 'have made the colonel beastly fu', and put him to bed. But Mistress St. Clair has rated them soundly, and sent all off except Captain Westron, who won't leave the house until Mistress Macgregor forgives him; it's nae use arguing wi' a tipsy mon, sae here he comes.'

At this moment Sophia slowly opened her eyes, and glancing wildly around, screamed, 'He is murdered—I saw him; O how horrible!'

'Na, na! there's nae harm done!' said Mrs. Douglas, soothingly.

'It is a judgment,' murmured Sophia, some indistinct ideas floating through her brain.

'He'll be weel enough in the morning!' urged Mrs. Douglas.

'He is dead! dead, madam; O horror! and I—' a smothered groan filled up the sentence.

'Be calm; be comforted, donna;' whispered Don Pedro, in a low sad tone; 'your happy husband is well.'

Sophia started; his voice recalled to her memory the vows which he had made when she was scarcely conscious; their import flashed across her mind, and fixing on him a piteous look, she hid her face in my bosom.

'I am astonished,' rebuked Mrs. St. Clair, upon her return, 'that you can be so absurd; a night's rest and soda-water will enable the colonel in the morning to appreciate his wife's overweening sensibility.'

Sophia was humbled and admonished by the crowd of feelings new and overwhelming that struggled in her bosom. 'Pardon me, madam,' she said, 'if I have not learnt to

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witness for the first time such human degradation unmoved. Blame me not; I shall doubtless grow perfect in my worldly lesson all too soon.'

'Ha, puir thing,' sympathized Mrs. Douglas; 'ye hae a deal to learn yet.'

'Indeed, indeed, madam, I fear that I have,' she replied; suddenly burst into tears, and hurried from the room.

(To be continued.)

HUNTING SONG.

BY MILES MALLORY.

RECITATIVE.

Hark! the horn calls away,
Come the grave, come the gay,
Wake to music that wakens the skies,
Quit the bondage of sloth, and arise!

From the east breaks the morn,
See the sun-beams adorn
The wild heath and the mountain so high;
Shrilly opes the stanch hound,
The steed neighs to the sound,
And the woods and the valleys reply.

Our forefathers, though rude,
Proved their greatness of blood
By encount'ring the hart and the boar;
Ruddy health flushed each face,
Ay, and youth joined the chase,
And taught woodlands and forests to roar.

Hence, of noble descent,
Hills and wilds we frequent,
Where the bosom of nature's revealed;—
Though, in life's busy day,
Man of man makes a prey,
Still let ours be the prey of the field.

With the chase in full sight,
Gods! how great the delight,
How our mortal sensations refine;
Where is care? where is fear?
Like the winds, in the rear,
And the man's lost in something divine.

Now to horse, my brave boys!
Lo! each pants for the joys
That give freedom and life to the soul;
Then at eve we'll dismount,
Toils and pleasures recount,
And renew the chase over the bowl!

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THE METROPOLITAN.

No. CXXII.

JUNE, 1841.

THE BLUE BELLES OF ENGLAND.*

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XV.

HOPES AND FEARS—PLOTS AND PLANS—NEW LOVE AND OLD LOVE.

At the moment of her departure from Bruton Street, Constance had ventured to ask Mrs. Hartley to call for her in her way home from the party to which she and her younger daughters were going—a request which was graciously complied with, both in word and deed. Lady Georgina Grayton and Lord Willoughby had already taken their departure, when 'Mrs. Hartley's carriage for Miss Ridley' was announced; and dear to Constance as was the joy of listening to the voice of Mortimer, she was not sorry to be summoned, for there was something in the manner in which she perceived the eyes of Mr. Bradley fixed upon her which greatly annoyed her.

As soon as Lady Georgina and Lord Willoughby had retired, Mr. Fitzosborne had placed himself beside Lady Dort, and entered into conversation with her. Mortimer, who had not reseated himself after taking leave of her ladyship, then led the painter apart, and for a few minutes whispered in his ear; after which the poet again placed himself beside Miss Ridley, and, if possible, seemed more than ever bent on winning her soul, as well as her ear, to listen to his whispered but most animated eloquence. Nor would he have found this at all more difficult than heretofore, had the eyes of Mr. Bradley been less offensively fixed upon her; for neither Lady Dort nor Mr. Fitzosborne appeared disposed to pay any attention except to each other. But an idea had suggested itself to Constance, which would not let her enjoy what she so dearly valued. She fancied that, at the request of Mr. Mortimer, the artist was studying her features, in order to make a sketch of them from memory, and this caused her not only a feeling of painful embarrassment, but a degree of uneasiness of a much graver kind, and which effectually banished every emotion resembling pleasure from her mind. 'Would Mortimer have done this, had he thought her worthy of becoming his wife?' was the question that her heart suggested, and her judgment so instantly answered in the negative, that her fair cheek grew pale, and she wished for nothing so much as to be alone, to meditate on the most fitting way of proving to him that she was not the light, vain creature which he seemed to think.

Gladly, therefore, did she hear the carriage announced, and not without pleasure, despite her vexation, did she mark the heavy shade of melancholy which settled on the countenance of Mortimer as she rose to go. Lady Dort started up to receive her farewell, and to return it with a vast profusion of affectionate lamentations that the hateful moment was so soon arrived. 'But why go yet?' she added. 'Let us not be the slaves of a round wig and a pair of horses. Sit down again, sweet Constance, for one short half hour, I entreat you!'

'I entreat you!' echoed Mr. Mortimer.

Constance, as we know, had confessed to her own heart that she was in love, and that

* Continued from p. 273.

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her own heart had whispered to her that she was beloved. Nevertheless, she was not prepared for this sort of demand upon her. She coloured, and, looking a little taller than usual, thanked Lady Dort for her kindness, without alluding to its echo, said she could not keep Mrs. Hartley's carriage waiting, and, in reply to her ladyship's earnest injunction not to forget 'to-morrow evening,' declared that such forgetfulness was quite impossible, and that she trusted nothing would prevent her having the pleasure of waiting upon her.

During the whole of this little scene, the eyes of Mr. Fitzosborne were fixed upon Constance; but he had chosen his attitude beside the chimney well; nothing could be less conspicuous;—besides, there was nobody looking at him. Having received a last farewell pressure of the hand from Lady Dort, Constance bestowed a graceful bow upon him as she retired, and was preparing to give its fellow to Mr. Mortimer, when she perceived that he had stationed himself at the door in order to escort her to the carriage. To refuse his offered arm was, of course, out of the question, but he walked beside her in the most profound silence. He was offended, deeply offended; and fortunate it was for him that he was so; for the fair girl at his side, albeit he had made a very strong impression on her heart, was in no mood to have received any farther indications of his thinking himself a privileged person, favourably.

But if this was fortunate for his love, it was fortunate for hers too; for, of all men living, Mr. Mortimer was the one whose tender passions the most absolutely required obstacles, difficulties, and *contretems* to bring them to perfection. Nothing, indeed, could be more tremblingly delicate than the conformation of his mind on this important subject; for, did any lady whom he particularly admired appear, during their first two or three interviews, in any degree insensible to the charms of his conversation, the nascent partiality withered and died away like a flower rudely crushed; while the fairest and most gifted creature that ever breathed had only to prove to him that no obstacle of any kind remained to delay the union for which he had pleaded with thoughts of fire and words of flame, in order to awaken a thousand delicate doubts and sentimental fears lest their souls were not sufficiently in unison to ensure the perennial harmony in which it was his wish to live. Constance had distinctly shown him, on more occasions than one, that she was *not* insensible to his power of pleasing, and now she had, with equal distinctness, shown him not only that she was not to be won unsought, but that the wooing must be in conformity to her own taste, in order to be successful.

Nothing, therefore, could be much more vehement than was the paroxysm of love in which he watched the savage rapidity of the chariot-wheels which bore her from him, and nothing could be more favourable to the continuation of the interesting, all-absorbing sentiment he wished to inspire, than the mixture of admiration and displeasure, of hope and of fear, which fluttered in the heart of Constance as she left him.

She would have given much could she have turned away, as he did, to solitary meditation and delicious reverie; but her case was widely different. Mrs. Hartley, Margaretta, and Caroline, were in the carriage that received her, as Henry Mortimer silently, but with a deep and long-drawn sigh, quitted her hand.

'Who was it, Constance, that put you into the carriage?' said Caroline, the moment the door was closed.

'Lord! Caroline, don't you know Henry Mortimer? What a stupid girl you must be!' said Margaretta.'

'Had you a large party, my dear?' said Mrs. Hartley.

Delighted to escape pronouncing the name of Mortimer, Constance readily replied, 'No, not a large party at all, but a very pleasant one.'

'And whom had you, my dear?'

Constance gave the names of the company, concluding the list thus, 'And the gentleman who put me into the carriage.'

'The gentleman who put you into the carriage!' repeated Mrs. Hartley, playfully tapping the shoulder of Constance with her fan. 'You have not yet learned his name quite perfectly, I presume? Nevertheless, my dear Miss Ridley, I have positively been told this evening that "the gentleman who put you into the carriage" is not only going to teach you his name, but to give it to you.'

'How very, *very* absurd people are!' exclaimed Constance in reply; 'and how difficult it is even to guess what could possibly put such ridiculous nonsense into their heads!' and thankful was she, as she said this, that the burning blush which she felt tingling on her cheek was invisible.

'Nay, my dear,' said Margaretta, with rather a provoking little titter, 'I cannot agree with you in thinking this so very difficult. Perhaps you are not aware that an opera-box *au seconde* is a very conspicuous place?'

Constance was silenced. She did remember, and now with a feeling of very severe self-reproach, that she had heard 'nothing but Mortimer' during the hour he had sat beside her on the night alluded to by Margaretta, and that it was more than probable, that although during these delightful moments she had utterly forgotten all eyes but his, all eyes had not forgotten her, and that she had thus made herself a theme for observation which she would have given up a thousand operas to avoid, and of reports, chiefly painful perhaps because they were not true.

The effect of all this upon Mrs. Hartley was, however, widely different—she was delighted. It is much easier for a lady, with two thousand a-year and three pretty daughters, to make them, and herself, and her house, and her horses, and her carriage,

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look elegant, and quite like other people's, than to make them look elegant and *not* quite like other people's. Of this Mrs. Hartley was very fully aware; and never did a London season end without her being conscious, that though she had succeeded perfectly in achieving the first, she had as perfectly failed in achieving the last. Many schemes had suggested themselves as a remedy for this ineffective mediocrity, but unhappily they all required more money than she could afford to spend, or more influence than she was likely to acquire, before they could be brought to maturity. Often had she meditated on the possibility of following at a distance the brilliant and remarkable career of Lady Dort, who had attained her envied celebrity much less by means of her superior income, than by the talent with which she contrived to bring around her all the most elegant as well as all the most remarkable persons in the metropolis. But a strong consciousness of the difficulty of making a brilliant beginning in this line, and a horror of failure if her object should be both notorious and abortive, had ever withheld her from the attempt. But now, and for the first time, she thought that she could see her way clear before her—for what a nucleus would Henry Mortimer make for the blaze of brightness which she wished to establish in her drawing-rooms! The poet Mortimer in love with, and reported to be engaged to, a member of her family, would be quite sufficient to *set her going*, and this once done, she trusted to her own peculiar talent for turning everything to the best account for subsequent success.

It was long since her daughters had seen her in such excellent spirits, and they respectively reasoned upon it according to their lights.

'If mamma were not so much afraid of having a red face,' thought Caroline, 'I should think that she had been taking two glasses of champagne instead of one to-night.'

'My mother has some promising plot in her head,' thought Margaretta. 'I would bet my emerald bracelets against her wedding ring, that I shall be invited to a tête-à-tête breakfast with her to-morrow.'

'Would I were at home and in bed!' sighed poor Constance. 'What can make Mrs. Hartley so talkative?'

* * * *

It was not till the broad light of day was finding its way athwart her shutters and curtains that Constance closed her eyes in sleep. The situation in which she found herself, not only with respect to Mr. Mortimer's conduct and manner towards her, but also as to the state of her own heart, was so perfectly new to her, that her twenty-one years of experience in the affairs of life were not sufficient to make her feel at ease under it.

'I will open my whole heart to Penelope,' thought she, as she turned herself for the hundredth time upon her pillow; and having made this very wise and exceedingly courageous resolution, she closed her aching eyes, and fell asleep.

Margaretta was quite right. Mrs. Hartley had not reached the top of the stairs before she said, 'I know I shall be lazy to-morrow, Margaret; I will have my breakfast in my own room, if you will come to pour out my tea for me.' Caroline heard the appointment, and, as usual, made her own use of it, so that Penelope and her friend found themselves, very much to their satisfaction, once more tête-à-tête beside their breakfast-table.

This was always a signal for being particularly confidential and comfortable, and Penelope opened the conversation by saying, 'Now, then, dear Constance, give me a full, true, and particular account of everything that happened to you yesterday. Did you enjoy it?—were you very happy?—was it very delightful?'

In answer to which, Constance gave a brief, but tolerably graphic description of the whole party; having concluded which, she said, 'And now, Penelope, having said so much about the rest of the party, I want to talk to you a little about myself. Will you listen to me?'

'Will I?—is it a question, dearest?'

'I ought to have asked none,' returned Constance, 'I ought to have asked that you would listen to me with very great indulgence, for indeed, Penelope, I want it. I certainly am not very happy and I fear I am not very wise.'

'What can have passed during the hours of yesterday evening to enable you to say this with so grave an aspect, Constance, as almost to persuade me that you are in earnest? What has happened to make you unhappy? and what have you done that is unwise?'

'Penelope, I believe I am what is called in love with a man who, I am greatly inclined to think, has no intention of offering to marry me. Is not this sufficient to answer both your questions?'

'Perhaps it might, did I feel quite certain the statement were correct; but I do not. Mr. Mortimer is, as I presume, the man?'

'Alas!' replied Constance, 'tis as *I* presume. Yes, Mr. Mortimer is the man.'

'Then I do not agree with you in thinking that the man you love has no intention of offering to marry you,' said Penelope.

'I would to heaven you knew as much as I do, and yet could say so still,' returned Constance, colouring; 'and that, not only as it might create hope for the future, but remove the weight of some very terrible fears for the past.'

'You speak in riddles, my Constance, and I cannot comprehend you,' said Penelope. 'If you really mean that I should understand what has passed, you must be more matter-of-fact and prosaic.'

'What has passed! That sounds as if I had positive facts and striking adventures to relate, and that I have not. But give me

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a patient hearing, dearest Penelope, laugh at me as little as you can, and love me not the less for my folly, and I will tell you—all that I know myself. And now, then, to begin with the beginning. I do think that Mr. Mortimer likes me—admires me, as people call it; I have never met him without his having given me reason to think so, and last night certainly not less than heretofore. But, nevertheless, Penelope, I do *not* think his manner to me is exactly that of a man who—in short I doubt if he esteems me sufficiently to make me his wife.'

'As how, Constance?' said Miss Hartley, gravely.

'There is the difficulty. I know not how to describe the shades, tints, and tones of manner which have suggested this painful surmise, without deluding you by saying either too much or too little. Oh! it is very difficult! I think he makes me too conspicuous by the sort of attention he pays me; I think he seems to expect a sort of attention from me in return, which—which such a man would hardly approve in the woman he hoped to marry. This is all, I believe. And now I protest to you, Penelope, I know not if it amount to much or little—and this, too, I suppose you will call a riddle.'

'No, Constance, I think I now fully understand you,' replied her friend. 'But you must answer me one question—do you dislike and blame this conduct—this manner let us call it—sufficiently for the feeling to interfere with the partiality you have acknowledged, or does it only tend to increase your anxiety respecting his intentions?'

Again Constance coloured, and for a moment remained silent. 'That is what may be called a shrewd question, I suspect, by the sort of *coup* it gives me here,' she said at length, placing her hand on her bosom, 'but I will answer it as clearly and truly as I can, Penelope. I think that if Mr. Mortimer were to propose to me, I should very speedily forget all this and accept him.'

'As long as you continue so to think and feel, the case is not a difficult one,' replied Miss Hartley. 'You have only to let matters take their course, and your first campaign in London will end by your returning to Appleby an affianced woman—and probably nobody will feel very greatly astonished at this result of your introduction to the *beau monde*.'

'You have not touched the point on which I especially wished to consult you,' returned Constance. 'You have not told me if you think I ought to make any change in my manner to him—whether I ought to make him feel that I do not approve his very particular style of addressing me—of looking at me—of behaving to me.'

'On that point, dearest Constance, I would not for the world advise you, being quite sure that no advice could so certainly lead you right as your own truly delicate mind. Whether you make any resolution about it or not, be very sure that if Mr. Mortimer's manner be in any way what it ought *not* to be, he will find out that you think it so.'

'Then you do not suppose that—that the partiality of which I have confessed myself conscious, has so shown itself, as to make him fancy—as to make him think—?'

'No, Constance, I do not,' interrupted Penelope, affectionately kissing the fair forehead of her friend. 'Torment yourself with no such idle fear. I will take it upon myself to assure you that there is no ground for it. I will venture to recommend to you what I should not to most young ladies under similar circumstances, namely, that you should treat him exactly as the impulse of your feelings shall prompt, for I am quite satisfied that they will lead you right. We have every reason to suppose that you will see him often, my dear Constance, and you cannot long be kept in doubt as to the object of the very particular attention he shows you. Should he be trifling with you, you will not fail to discover it, and the evil will bring its own remedy, for you could not long love, or even fancy that you love, a trifler.'

As Constance listened to her friend with the wish and intention, in very simple sincerity, of eking out her own wisdom by that of one whose judgment she held to be excellent, every word produced effect, and her spirits were calmed, and her heart comforted by the consultation. The conversation then turned, as it was fair and just it should do, on Penelope's engagement with Mr. Markham.

'Alas! Constance,' said Miss Hartley with a heavy sigh, 'how very different—how perfectly contrasted are our positions! No sooner shall you have ascertained that you really like each other well enough to wish to marry, than the desired path will open before you without an obstacle of any kind; while, with us, the more surely we become convinced that each loves the other beyond the possibility—I had almost said the hope—of changing, the more evident is it that in all human probability we can never be united. Markham tells me that by every inquiry he can make it is evident that promotion never lay so wholly in interest as it does at present; and of interest, alas! he has none.'

'But surely, Penelope, there seems, by all one hears and reads, to be a movement in the profession now, greatly beyond what there has been of late; and this must give us hope that such an officer as we know John Markham has proved himself, may reasonably expect to get forward.'

'The movement you mention only proves, Constance, that interest might be useful now, which it hardly could have been some time ago; but this only shows the more, how lamentable is the want of it.'

'At any rate there is comfort, dearest Penelope, in knowing that for a few weeks, at least, you are within reach of each other. This reparation of his vessel at Sheerness is great happiness.'

'It is, it is!' returned Penelope, adding,

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the moment afterwards, 'or at least it ought to be; but I do assure you, Constance,' and tears started to her eyes as she spoke, 'I do assure you, that I sometimes think the more we see of each other the more miserable we are likely to be. In respect to myself I think it must be so. He is such a noble-hearted being, Constance! O how shall I bear to part with him again for years, and that, too, with no reasonable hope of ever being his at last!'

There was unhappily too much of truth in this statement for the voice of friendship to stifle it, however ardent its hopes, or sanguine its wishes. Constance felt this, and perhaps did more good by sympathizing in the sorrow of her friend, than she could have done by giving battle to it; and by degrees the admirable mind of Penelope forced itself back to its ordinary tone of quiet submission to a situation which she had no power to improve; and then their precious monopoly of the drawing-room was invaded; the other members of the family appeared; the engagements of the coming week were discussed, and all deeper feelings, as much as might be, forgotten. The knocker began to thunder,

'Its custom always in the afternoon,'

and the business of the day began.

CHAPTER XVI.

OLD ACQUAINTANCE NOT FORGOT—A WIDOWED MOTHER AND HER ONLY CHILD RENDERED INTERESTING BY A NEW PROCESS—GROWING LOVE.

Among the earliest of the morning visitors was Mr. Fitzosborne. His acquaintance in the family of Mrs. Hartley was of long standing, that lady's husband having been the intimate companion of Fitzosborne's father, both at school and college—an intimacy which endured till the death of Mr. Hartley; and even after that event Fitzosborne, the father, continued to visit Mrs. Hartley whenever she was in town, sometimes with his young son in his hand, till he went abroad with him, about four years before the period of which we are now treating. He did not live to return; but the young man, from respect to the memory of their former intimacy, had made a point of calling on Mrs. Hartley as soon as he learned she was in town. Whether he would so speedily have returned for a second visit, if the vision of Constance Ridley had not appeared before him during the first, may be doubted; but his appearance was welcomed by all the family by a very gracious smile, and he was immediately asked by the lady of the mansion if, for old acquaintance sake, he would waive ceremony, and give them the pleasure of his company at dinner on the Wednesday week following? The invitation was as promptly accepted as given, and seemed immediately to place the young man on the easy terms of an old friend.

Frederic Fitzosborne was not Henry Mortimer, nor like him in any essential particular, except in having a handsome person and gentlemanlike address. In all else it would have been difficult to find any two men, both highly educated, and both accustomed to the highest class of society, more completely dissimilar. A total absence of every species of affectation, and the ever-ready presence of a clear and sound judgment, formed perhaps the most striking features (to those who knew him but superficially) in the character of Frederic Fitzosborne. Those who knew him better were aware that undeviating principle, and a will stedfast in adhering to it on every point of importance enough to be tested by its application, constituted its more essential attributes. Warm, constant, and devoted in his attachments, suspicion was a feeling unknown to him. There was no doubting, varying, vacillating interval with him between esteem and contempt. It was possible, though not very likely, that he might be deceived, but it was not possible that the deception could last long; and with him friendship once established was as enduring as sincere. Among the graces of his mind may be reckoned that delicate sensitiveness of appreciation which is denominated taste; and herein was the difference between him and Mortimer most especially remarkable; the more so, certainly, because of all the qualities of mind this was the one upon which the poet set the highest value, and in which he with most conscientious sincerity believed himself to excel all, or very nearly all men, dead, living, or about to live. Petrarch, indeed, he conceived to have borne a very close affinity to himself in this particular, and he was wont to quote, with a sort of twin-brotherly affection, the delicious sighings of that worshipper of beauty in earth, air, and heaven, as a proof of the extraordinary similarity of their souls therein. No one, indeed, who ever heard him recite these passages, in the soft sweet whisper which more resembled the fragrance-laden breathings of Zephyrus, than mere human speech, could doubt that Henry Mortimer was a man of taste: and so also was Mr. Fitzosborne; but he never talked about it. If on any occasion he was conscious of a feeling which others might deem fastidious, he concealed it with all possible caution, so that it not unfrequently happened that he was accounted cold and indifferent, because he restrained the warm expression of admiration which he sometimes felt, that he might merge in level tranquillity of tone the more frequent absence of it. Moreover, his taste was the offspring of judgment, and not of sensation, and had more of the delicate purity of truth, than of the fanciful exaggeration of imagination in it; so that altogether he was, as we have said, as little like Mr. Henry Mortimer as it was well possible for one intellectual, elegant-minded man to be to another.

To Mrs. Hartley the arrival of Mr. Fitzosborne was the source of much satisfaction. If she was to make a hit this season,—if her

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parties were to be *cités* as something considerably above par, and the admission to which it was worth some effort to obtain, such individuals as Fitzosborne, or as nearly like him as it would be possible to find, would be worth their weight in Sevre china, to say the very least. His welcome, therefore, was everything he could wish, and he repaid it by throwing the conversation to the time when his father was among the most frequent guests at the table of the late Mr. Hartley. This was a period of her existence to which Mrs. Hartley loved to refer, for she was then both rich and beautiful, and she sustained the conversation with such evident pleasure and interest, that if the young man's chief object in making the visit had been to converse with Miss Ridley, he must have been greatly disappointed, as she was seated at nearly as great a distance from him as the arrangement of the morning circle would permit, and appeared to be giving all her attention to the needlework on which she was employed.

The most acute and watchful observer, however, would have failed to discover any symptom of his being otherwise than exceedingly well pleased, either in his look or manner; it is probable, therefore, that his purpose was not to exhibit his admiration for Constance, by distinguishing her in any way.

Mrs. Hartley had quite sufficient tact to perceive that the willingness with which he listened to her was genuine, and had she not been aware of this, she would speedily have taken care to retreat from it; her partiality for Mr. Fitzosborne's conversation not being sufficient, greatly as she admired him, to make her forget that the object she had in view was not to hear him, or even herself, talk, but to make him feel himself pleasantly at home in her drawing-room.

Observing, however, that no wandering glance or languid tone gave signal that he had had enough of former reminiscences, she ventured to start a fresh subject in the same direction, and said,

'Do you remember that singular, but very charming person, Mrs. Morley? How excessively kind your father was to her! Do you remember her, Mr. Fitzosborne?'

'Certainly I do,' replied the young man, smiling.

'I should so like to know what has become of her! Do tell me if you have ever heard or seen anything of her since you went abroad with your father.'

'There is no one among my countrywomen,' he replied, 'of whom I saw so much while in Italy. Just before my poor father died, her husband, herself, and her little girl, passed nearly three months in the same house with us.'

'You don't say so! I know that your excellent father always treated her as if she had been his own child. By-the-by, now I think of it, I believe she *was* his ward?'

'Yes, she was his ward, as well as his first cousin,' replied Mr. Fitzosborne.

'O to be sure! how excessively stupid in me to forget the relationship. Have you heard of her since, Mr. Fitzosborne? I hope she is quite well!'

'She is quite well, I thank you. I have just left her.'

'Just left her! Good gracious, then, she is in London! Only conceive! and that I should not even know that she was in England! And that harum-scarum husband of hers! Does he still set off every now and then to look after a butterfly in Africa?'

'Mr. Morley never returned from his Egyptian expedition; he died at Thebes about three years ago.'

'Poor dear Mrs. Morley! I really believe she was exceedingly attached to him. Is she left with only that one little girl?'

'She never had any child but Mabel.'

'Poor thing! and is the dear little creature the same extraordinary oddity that she used to be?'

'She is a singular girl, certainly. But she is not a very little creature now. She is twelve years old, I think.'

'Is it possible? Mercy on me! How time flies! And how is Mrs. Morley looking? Many people thought her pretty—though she was always rather crooked, you know.'

'Was she?' said Fitzosborne, smiling.

'O—yes, decidedly. But somehow or other it was less observable in her than it would have been in any other person. She had magnificent eyes, I remember, and was excessively clever, I believe—was she not?'

'She was, and is, Mrs. Hartley, one of the cleverest women I have ever known. A little more eccentric, perhaps, than her friends would wish, but possessing, nevertheless, many charming qualities, as well as a very brilliant capacity.'

'How delighted I should be to see her again!' cried Mrs. Hartley with much fervour. 'Do you think she would like me to call upon her? Do you think she remembers me?'

'I am sure I may venture to answer both questions in the affirmative. Were it only for the love she bears to the memory of my father, I feel quite certain it would give her pleasure to see any part of the family of one of his oldest friends.'

'Thus encouraged, Mr. Fitzosborne, I shall not delay an hour unnecessarily, in renewing my acquaintance with her. I have an awful list of morning visits for to-day, but nevertheless I shall add her name to it. And now,' drawing forth from a portfolio the list she had been preparing for her coachman, 'and now for her address?'

'She is lodging in Clarges-street,' he replied. 'I positively forget the number, but I will send it to you directly.'

'No, no, Mr. Fitzosborne, you certainly shall not do that. Though I have all the inclination in the world to renew my acquaintance with your charming cousin, it must not be done at the expense of so much inconvenience to you. If you will send me her ad-

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dress any time before four to-morrow, it will come in excellent time for that day's business.'

'Nevertheless you shall have it to-day,' he replied, with a smile, which Mrs. Hartley interpreted into a very flattering acknowledgment of her amiable condescension in calling upon a lady in lodgings. She remembered of old that the individual in question, though well connected, and making herself a sort of position of her own, by the manner in which she contrived to be distinguished from the rest of the world, had nevertheless the reputation of being very particularly poor, having married a man almost as clever, and considerably more whimsical than herself, nobly born, but literally not possessing a single shilling with which to endow her by way of settlement. All this Mrs. Hartley freshly remembered, as she remarked the evident satisfaction which her proposal had occasioned. Nothing could jump better with the intention of converting Mr. Fitzosborne into a frequent and intimate guest, and, returning his smile in the most amiable manner possible, she replied to his assurance that she should have the address that day, by saying, 'Shall I? then to-day I will make my call. Who knows but I may be able to enlist her for our little party on Wednesday week? Ah! how well I remember the last time she dined with me! Do you think that on the score of our old, though long interrupted acquaintance, I may be able to induce her to forgive so abrupt an invitation?'

'I cannot think that she would feel it to be so,' replied Fitzosborne. 'For her engagements of course I cannot answer, but I will venture to say, that if she is disengaged, she will come to you with great pleasure.'

'I shall be delighted,' said Mrs. Hartley, 'if—'

'By-the-bye,' said Mr. Fitzosborne, suddenly interrupting her, and colouring a little, 'there is one circumstance which I had quite forgotten, and with which, in all honour and honesty, I must make you acquainted. Mrs. Morley can only visit where she can be received without ceremony, because Mabel, the little girl for whom you were inquiring, always accompanies her.'

'Has she really brought her out already?' said Mrs. Hartley, raising her eyebrows into the angular arch which on most brows denotes surprise.

'She has not brought her out, but she brings her out,' returned Mr. Fitzosborne, laughing. 'You have said, my dear Mrs. Hartley, that you remember the eccentricities of my good cousin, and this pertinacious adhesion to her little girl must, I suppose, be classed as one of them. But were she to enter seriously with you upon the subject, she would tell you that it is because she has not the means of procuring the attendance of such a person as she should feel justified in leaving as the protector and companion of her child.'

'Really! To be sure it does seem very extraordinary. But perhaps you think she is right, Mr. Fitzosborne; and if so, I do assure you I should find it difficult to persuade myself that she is wrong.'

'You are very obliging, my dear Mrs. Hartley,' replied the young man, 'but I honestly confess to you that I by no means feel competent to decide the question. I truly believe that although Mrs. Morley, in conformity to what appears to be an essential part of her nature, gives an air of whimsical wilfulness to this determination of having her daughter always with her, I do indeed truly believe that at the very bottom of her heart she thinks it her duty; and if this be so, it is impossible not to respect the steady pertinacity with which she adheres to it. Were it otherwise—did I believe that instead of performing what must often be an embarrassing duty, she was only amusing and indulging herself and her child, my opinion would be very different; for without this conscientious feeling to redeem its want of wisdom, I suspect that I should see as many reasons to disapprove the system, as the most severe of her critics could do.'

'Then why, my dearest Mr. Fitzosborne, do you not tell her so?' said Mrs. Hartley, with an accent which was intended to indicate the impossibility of Mrs. Morley, or Mrs. any one else, having sufficient folly to refuse compliance with what he should recommend.

'I must not tell you,' he replied, laughing, and rising to take leave, 'how very little likely Mrs. Morley is to be influenced by my opinion, or perhaps by that of any one—for if I do, you might think more of my good cousin than she deserves. Having confessed that she is whimsical and wilful, I have said the very worst that can be said of her, and she has a multitude of fine qualities to redeem this—as you will find, my dear Mrs. Hartley, if you honour her by your friendship.'

Mr. Fitzosborne then addressed a few words to Constance and her friend Penelope, as he walked across the room towards the door, and, with a smiling bow to the other young ladies, left the room.

'That is the handsomest man in London,' said Caroline, as soon as he had disappeared. 'What a shame it is he does not waltz!'

'Yes, he is very handsome, and very elegant,' replied her sister Margaret; 'but I suspect he not only thinks himself too great a man to waltz, but too great a man to speak to young ladies at all.'

'He certainly did not bestow much of his attention upon us,' added Penelope; 'perhaps he abstains in pity, for fear that if we listened to his converse, we should lose our peace of mind for ever. Had you any conversation with him yesterday, Constance?'

'Not at all,' replied Constance; 'so I flatter myself that as yet I am safe; for though I have met him repeatedly, I do not think he has ever addressed half-a-dozen words to me *de suite*. But if his conversation carry such danger with it, what will become of Mrs. Hartley? for nothing could be more

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animated than his manner of talking to her.'

'Jealous, young ladies! One, two, three, four! Every one of you victims to the yellow-eyed monster! I am very sorry for you; and just at present I really am afraid that I can offer you no consolation, for I do entirely believe that, as you say, Constance, the venerable Mrs. Hartley has more attraction for him than any of you. But I am ready to confess that we do not quite start fair, for, as I have told you before, we are very old friends, though we have never till to-day had any opportunity of talking over the days that are gone.'

'Good gracious, mamma!' exclaimed Caroline, 'you make him out to be perfectly an old man. What age do you suppose he is?'

'Quite young enough to make an admirable *partie*, or partner, for you, Caroline, if you can contrive to win him. He has been abroad for several years, but I do not believe that he is more than seven or eight-and-twenty. But *ecoutez, mes demoiselles*; I am generously going to give you all the fairest chance I can, for I have invited him to dine here on Wednesday week—quite a small friendly party: and I mean to ask that very queer woman his cousin, as I plainly perceive she is a sort of protegée, and that nothing will please him so well.'

'What! that Mrs. Morley he was talking about?' said Caroline.

'Yes, my dear. He is to send me her address directly, and I shall call upon her when we go out. But pray tell me, Caroline, as you seem to have been attending a good deal to what passed between us, did you hear what he said about Mrs. Morley's daughter?'

'I am sure I did not attend to his conversation particularly, mamma,' replied Caroline, pouting. 'Why should I, as he never waltzes? No, I did not hear anything about her daughter. What was it he said?'

'Nothing exactly calculated to make any of us fear a rival,' replied Mrs. Hartley. 'The young lady is but twelve years old, nevertheless she must be invited to dinner.'

'To dinner, mamma? a child twelve years old invited to dinner!' exclaimed Margaretta, looking vehemently astonished. 'Surely you must be jesting.'

'Not at all, my dear. If we find the lady at home, you shall hear me speak the invitation to Miss Mabel.'

'Miss Mabel! What a name! Upon my word it is altogether too ridiculous,' returned Margaretta, knitting her fair brows into a look of very serious displeasure. 'But if you are really in earnest, mamma, I only hope you do not mean to ask anybody else. Imagine the effect!'

'Yes, I mean to have Mr. Mortimer; and unfortunately I have already asked John Markham for that day, and I confess I think he may be a little *de trop*—but fear nothing on the score of Miss Mabel Morley. If Mr. Fitzosborne really means to *proné* these cousins, be very sure that it will become the mode to invite this little lady at every small *recherché* party throughout the season. I will make you any bet you like, that Lady Dort will have her—probably *has* had her already. I can hardly hope to be fortunate enough to be the first; I may, however, be amongst the most *empressées*, you know. I am perfectly sure it will answer; for the more I recall everything about this queer Mrs. Morley, the more convinced I feel that I shall make a capital hit if I can contrive, on the score of old acquaintance, to get up an intimacy with her. She is first cousin, I think it is, to Fitzosborne, and that of itself would be quite enough, this year, at any rate, while he is still unappropriated, and still stands on the ladies' list as *Match No.* 1. Besides—O! there are many reasons, I assure you, why the Morley and the Mabel too may be worth cultivating. You remember what I said to you this morning, Margaretta?'

Margaretta nodded.

'Well, then—she was considered, even before she had been so many years abroad, as quite distinguished in that line.'

This conversation, which had gradually sunk into a whisper between Mrs. Hartley and her second daughter, was here interrupted by the entrance of Sir James Ridley and his shadow, Mr. Marsh. Margaret looked at the baronet, and then from him—and then took up her work—and then laid it down again—and then looked at the baronet again—and then half closed her eyes, and breathed a very soft and gentle sigh—in short, she went through, with very considerable tact and skill, all the manœuvres appointed by established usage as a sort of manual for young ladies in her interesting situation.

Sir James Ridley saw it all; but, like many other clever young men who keep themselves particularly on their guard against the insidious attacks of the fair, he saw nothing in it to alarm him for his own safety, though much that suggested many kind and very amiable fears respecting hers.

'Poor girl!' thought he. 'Upon my soul, though, it is a cursed shame, and that's the truth; but how the devil can one help it? I no more intended to make her so distractedly in love with me, than to eat her—but what can't be cured must be endured—and that settles everything.'

Sir James occupied himself, while these thoughts were passing through his mind, in standing close to the ladies' work-table, precisely opposite to the place where the melancholy Margaret sat, with a frame of worsted-work before her, over which her ringlets were instructed to fall, so as to form a veil for her agitated countenance.

Constance and Penelope looked at each other, and smiled; Mrs. Hartley sighed deeply; Caroline eagerly snatched away a packet of white gloves, which the baronet was beginning to roll into balls, while Mr. Marsh (not for the first time) was taking cognizance of all the elegant little appendages to fine ladyism, by which the ingenious Mrs. Hartley contrived to elevate the style of her ready-furnished house into

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something that looked like a stage-scenery imitation of the home of a woman of fashion.

'She has money enough to make me into anything I like to be,' thought Mr. Marsh; and as usual he became exceedingly agreeable, and took care that Mrs. Hartley should see that there was no lady present, let her be as young or as lovely as she might, whom he considered as in any degree approaching herself in powers of attraction; not that Mr. Marsh was either such a coxcomb, or such a fool, as to imagine that a woman like Mrs. Hartley, almost as far removed as himself from a state of dotage, and evidently and unmistakeably in possession of an income, amounting at the very least to four times as much as his own, would commit so egregious an act of folly as to marry him, merely because she might happen to think him the most agreeable man in the world, and passionately in love with her. No, no; Mr. Marsh knew better: such thinkings, and believings, were all very well as far as they went; but it was not so that he hoped to win the lady. He now began, with rather more distinctness than heretofore, to explain to her some projects which he said were floating in his head, about vesting forty or fifty thousand pounds in the Dutch funds, on account of the higher rate of interest to be derived therefrom.

'Not, indeed,' he continued, 'that my income is such as to require any contrivances to increase it, for I have already considerably more than I can spend, as long as I remain unmarried. But of late, my dear Mrs. Hartley,' and he lowered his voice, 'of late I have somehow or other got it into my head, that if I could meet with a woman,'—and here followed a very charming sketch of Mrs. Hartley herself.

CHAPTER XVII.

DISAPPOINTMENT—AN EFFECTIVE GROUP—A BOUDOIR—BLUE TALK—A PRESENTATION.

The event upon which Henry Mortimer had hung so many hopes and wishes, namely, the introduction of Miss Ridley to Mrs. Gardener Stewart, encountered a sad impediment within a few hours before it should have taken place, that lady being suddenly seized, as she assured him, with a headache of so vehement a kind as to render the mere thought of Lady Dort's drawing-rooms a positive torture to her.

'Oh! much, very much, dear Mr. Mortimer!' she wrote, 'would I do to please you; and much, very much, if Heaven grants me strength, shall yet be done to prove how sincerely I esteem and value your friendship. But not to-night, Mr. Mortimer. To-night I cannot, dare not wish it. You must forgive me, but I cannot appear at Lady Dort's to-night.'

Mr. Mortimer, as we have said, was *un enfant gaté*, and, like all the rest of this troublesome class, valued everything that he did not get infinitely beyond everything that he did. He therefore appeared at Lady Dort's before the lady of his love with a brow oppressed with care, an eye that seemed calculated only to speak suffering, and a voice so attuned to melancholy, that it must have been a very hard heart which could have listened to it unmoved. Such was not the heart of Constance; she perceived that Mortimer was miserable, and she became miserable too. So that at first this second Monday by no means approached in happiness to that which had preceded it. But what an age did she seem to have passed through in the interval! Was it indeed possible that one short week only had passed since the hour in which she had first beheld Henry Mortimer? Was it possible that within that short space she could have undergone a metamorphosis so violent? It was a mystery that she could by no means understand; but that she had been free as air a week before, and now stood bound, magically spell-bound, before the eye that had fascinated her, was most certain, and to have smiled while he thus looked upon her in sorrow, would have been as impossible to her as to have danced a jig to the dead march in Saul.

Fortunately, however, one or two little circumstances occurred, which softened by degrees the bitter nature of Mr. Mortimer's grief, and enabled him to permit himself to be wafted by the soft breeze of female adulation from out the 'slough of despond' into the

'Regions mild of calm and serene air,'

produced by the honied breath of beauty and the pure light of wax tapers. Once again, as he heard, and was certain that Constance heard too, the voice of a very pretty woman, saying to her friend as they passed, 'I must get introduced to Mr. Mortimer to-night, or I shall certainly die. He is perfectly divine! I caught sight of him just now, and I could not help thinking that he looked like the incarnation of one of his beautiful odes—so sad, so graceful, so sublime!' Once again, as he heard this, he smiled, but at the same time whispered in her ear, 'Is it not hateful? Do you not pity me, Miss Ridley?'

This smile produced an effect upon Constance so very evident, and so very flattering, that the poet smiled again, and then the fair brow of the novice cleared entirely, and she looked as if neither earth, nor all its sorrows, could help her any longer from feeling herself in a state of perfect beatitude.

Penelope, as usual, was beside her, and felt her arm pressed by a movement that betokened some sudden emotion, upon which she looked up, and beheld the speaking countenance of Constance, so beaming with happiness, that she looked round her in all directions to discover the cause of it. She learnt nothing, however, from the look-out, excepting that the room was very full and very brilliant.

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At this moment, Mr. Mortimer, by the gentlest movement in the world, disengaged his arm from that of Constance, and saying, 'For an instant—forgive me,' glided off, leaving the two friends looking smilingly after him, and in full expectation of his immediate return. Return immediately, however, he did not, and their eyes, naturally following the way he went, soon discovered the cause of his defection.

In one corner of Lady Dort's second drawing-room, which was the apartment in which they then stood, was a recess, which had probably in days of yore been employed as that old-fashioned and long-banished accommodation called a closet, but which now formed a distinguished though irregular part of the room, being lined with fluted blue silk, and canopied by a drapery of the same, elaborately ornamented by tassels and fringe. In this recess there was of course a sofa, and on this sofa was of course a lady, nay, there were two, and it was towards them that the truant Mortimer now addressed his steps.

'What very remarkable-looking people,' said Penelope, 'do they not look, Constance, like a white rose and a white rose-bud? The least of them is a mere child. How strange to bring her to such a party as this!'

The simile hit upon by Miss Hartley was apt enough to make her friend smile, as she ventured furtively to reconnoitre the group. The lady she had compared to a white rose was a pretty-looking, but very pale woman, a little perhaps on the shady side of thirty, dressed entirely in white; but not of any of those transparent textures which fleet round our sylph-like waltzers, nor yet of the more soft and sober satin which some Vandyke-like beauties have still the wit to wear; neither could it be fairly assimilated to the drapery worn by the confidante of Tilburina, for it was not of white linen, but it was of muslin, thin, though not transparent, of delicate-looking texture, and the most snow-like purity of colour, and so voluminous in its folds, that notwithstanding the entire absence of all stiffness, it clung not too closely to the person of the fair creature who wore it. Its form was as nearly like that of the ample robes with which the ancient sculptors covered their fully-draped statues, as it was possible for a modern artist to make it, being *collected*, rather than *bound* round the waist, and arranged over the bust with such infinite grace and skill, that while every eye felt it to be whimsical, no voice (or scarcely any) ventured to censure it as absurd. The sleeves, which were very short, and *almost* of as classic a form as the drapery over the bust, disclosed arms of very peculiar beauty, being both plump and delicate in form, and of almost alabaster whiteness. Round the knot of hair which decorated the back of the well-formed little head was a small wreath of ivy leaves, being the only thing approaching to the nature of ornament which the dress displayed. Yet the most miss-like miss that was ever permitted to spend pa's money in finery must have been possessed of a bold and dauntless spirit ere she could have ventured to hint that this singularly-clad lady was not the very perfection of elegance—at least as long as she was in sight: when she had passed away, it might, perhaps, be remembered by the calculating and curious in such matters, that the value of her entire dress, her wedding ring included, could hardly have equalled that of a tolerably coquettish *soubrette* in full feather.

The 'bud' at her side, as pale, as fair, and as delicate-looking as herself, was attired with the most scrupulous exactness of similitude, ivy leaves and all; and as the little girl's hair, as well as her complexion, was very nearly the same as her mother's, the general air of resemblance fully justified Penelope's simile.

But as yet the resemblance was only general; the *charpente* was constructed upon the same pattern, and it was likely enough that if the after accidents of life favoured the same developments of character, the likeness would become still more remarkable. But at present the first near glance of a tolerably discriminating eye could not fail to discover a vast deal in the countenance of the mother which was not yet even *in bud* on that of the daughter, and which no twelve years, even under the forcing fervour of an eastern sun, could by possibility produce. There was thought even to meditation, and care even to melancholy, in the countenance of Mrs. Morley, yet, at times, the deep-set, but intensely bright blue eye, darted forth a shower of rays that lit up the soft dimpling cheek into such an expression of playful mischief as to convert the features, which might have served the moment before for those of the tragic muse, into a charming model for Euphrosyne.

Constance looked at her with great interest, and fortunately for the gratification of her curiosity, Mrs. Hartley had found a place on a sofa at no great distance, which for some reason or other was at that moment quite deserted, and to which she beckoned Penelope and Miss Ridley. From thence the group under the canopy, now augmented by Mr. Mortimer, (who, on seeing the young ladies he had escorted across the room seated by their *chaperone*, had placed himself beside the white rose,) might very conveniently be reconnoitred. The sofas were exactly at right angles, and so near that words uttered in a moderately audible tone from the one, might have been heard with perfect distinctness at the other. But had Constance been seated on the staircase, she would not have been more completely beyond the reach of hearing any sound from the lips of the fair lady who had so strongly excited her curiosity. Nor, had she been seated on a footstool at her feet, would she have heard more; for the words exchanged between the pale stranger and Mr. Mortimer were uttered in a whisper which it was certain none but each other could hear, and evident that none other were intended to hear.

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Now, though it was exceedingly far from the intention or inclination of Miss Ridley to listen to their conversation, there was something embarrassing in the consciousness of being so near as to render this very low whispering necessary in order to prevent it; and she not only turned her eyes, but her whole person, as assiduously from the group as she could, but endeavoured, by conversing in her usual tone with Mrs. Hartley, to give evidence that such extreme care was not necessary. But Mrs. Hartley's head was so full of her own projects, and her attention so exclusively occupied by endeavouring to espy among the large company present a few sufficiently distinguished to give consequence to her future *soirées*, yet within the compass of possibility to invite, that she not only failed to hear all that Constance said to her, but absolutely overlooked altogether the recess and its sofa—a degree of inattention which she would have very deeply lamented had she known who was seated there.

Thus baffled, and feeling every moment more ill at ease in a position which might lead Mortimer to suppose that she was, as it were, a spy upon his whispering intercourse with his fair neighbour, Constance murmured a request to Penelope that she would ask her mother to walk on—a petition which her intelligent friend immediately complied with, perfectly well understanding that both the distance and the presence of Mr. Mortimer must be equally disagreeable.

'Shall we see who Lady Dort has got round her in the other room, mamma?' said Penelope.

'If you will,' replied Mrs. Hartley, rising and offering her arm to Miss Ridley. 'I want to find Margaret too: she and Caroline went with your brother, my dear Constance, to look over some engravings in the boudoir. They will think I have forgotten them. Let us go there.'

Perhaps Constance thought that Mr. Mortimer might rejoin her as she retreated: but if so, she was disappointed; they reached the door of the room, and passed through it to the landing-place on the top of the stairs, on the opposite side of which was the '*boudoir*,' without being overtaken by him.

As they crossed before the stairs which led from the hall, they were accosted by Mr. Fitzosborne, who was coming up, hat in hand, and evidently just arrived.

'Are you going, Mrs. Hartley?' he said, in an accent that denoted a very civil degree of sorrow.

'How do you do, Mr. Fitzosborne! Going! O no! we are but just arrived. At least we have not been here long enough to be thinking of departure. Our *going* is only to that favourite little room of mine, the boudoir. Of course you know it well?'

'Yes, I have been there,' he replied, 'but I shall be very happy to go again with you, if you will let me.' And, so saying, he presented his arm, which Mrs. Hartley, well pleased, occupied, and in this manner preceded the two young ladies into the apartment.

The party they came to seek appeared to have concluded their examination of the splendid specimens of engravings which lay upon the table, and were amusing themselves by a minute investigation of the fanciful, but commodious, and very elegant Davenport, at which Lady Dort's multitudinous notes were composed. The writing-desk, however, though the ostensible object of the fabric, was, like Horace's girl in full dress, the least part of itself. The gently-sloped green velvet plain, upon whose surface so much wit and so many graceful phrases had been poured forth, was curiously surrounded, to the height of two feet above the level of the velvet, by a delicate trellis-work of extreme lightness, over and amidst which were trained a multitude of beautiful creeping plants, all in the highest perfection, amidst whose thick foliage the graceful blossoms hung in admirable unity of shape and colour, forming a bowery screen for whatever head might be bent forward to write within them, which could hardly fail, as Penelope remarked, to inspire a 'flowery style.'

'How exceedingly pretty!' exclaimed Mrs. Hartley; 'and how very like dear Lady Dort!—all fancy, all talent, all caprice! But one likes caprice—does one not, Mr. Fitzosborne, when it is the vehicle, as I may call it, of clever thoughts?'

'I should perhaps like some other vehicle better,' he replied, smiling.

'Well, I declare to Heaven, I would let my wife be as capricious as she would,' cried Sir James Ridley, who had seated himself in front of the epistolary bower, 'if she would invent such pretty things as this for me. Devilish pretty, isn't it, Mrs. Hartley?'

'Beautiful, Sir James! But do let me take this opportunity of presenting a valued old friend to a valued new one. Mr. Fitzosborne, Sir James Ridley—Sir James Ridley, Mr. Fitzosborne. I trust that you will often meet in Bruton Street. As the brother of my dear guest Miss Ridley, Sir James is naturally often with us—and as the son of my poor dear Mr. Hartley's oldest friend, Mr. Fitzosborne, I trust, will never be very long absent from the house of his widow.'

Penelope looked fidgetty. She had seen but little of Fitzosborne, but that little was quite sufficient to make her feel that a more uncongenial individual could hardly have been pushed upon him as an acquaintance than Sir James Ridley, and she turned her eyes upon him to see how he bore it. It seemed, however, that her mother had divined what would be agreeable to the elegant new acquaintance, whom she had converted into an old friend, more skilfully than she had done, for it was now with a very evident air of satisfaction that Fitzosborne presented his hand to the baronet, and with marked cordiality of manner that he entered into such sort of conversation with him as the tone and style of Sir James would permit. He assist-

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ed him, too, in an accurate examination of Lady Dort's flowery writing-table, and ascertained, greatly to Sir James' satisfaction, that there would be no difficulty at all in having one made upon the same plan, provided the talents of the carpenter were aided by those of the nurseryman.

'If ever I *do* commit such a foolish trick as marrying, I'll be hanged if my wife shan't write her invitations from such a desk as that. She shall, upon my life and soul. I would see any woman d—d before I'd marry her, if I did not find out that she had taste enough to value such an elegant thing as that —I would, upon my soul: and don't you think I should be very right, Mr. Fitzosborne?'

Penelope gave another glance; but she saw none of the distaste she anticipated. Yet it was evidently not because either the wise words, or the graceful swagger with which they were pronounced, had escaped observation, for Mr. Fitzosborne, on the contrary, was looking at and listening to the baronet with a degree of earnestness that looked more like the philosophical examination of a new specimen than of anything approaching to inattention. Nevertheless, though the said specimen was in her estimation so very paltry a one, it was turned from neither with contempt nor indifference; but to her extreme surprise Mr. Fitzosborne told his new acquaintance that if he would do him the pleasure of calling on him in Berkeley Square, where he was employed in rendering his father's old mansion habitable, he would introduce him to an exceedingly clever workman, whom he conceived to be quite capable of making from their joint description such a table as that before him.

'Oh! d—n it! I am not going to be married yet,' replied Sir James, laughing immoderately. 'Egad, Mr. Fitzosborne, upon my life and soul, I would just as soon hang myself—I would, upon my soul. However, I don't mean to say but what I shall be very happy to call on you, Mr. Fitzosborne—proud to make your acquaintance, sir. You are driving about just the most splendid horse in town in that neat cab of yours—you are, upon my soul; and I should take it as a personal favour if you would just let me have the refusal of him—the brown one, I mean, in case you should take it into your head to part with him; and if you don't happen to have taken an opera-box this season, you shall be always welcome to a place in mine —and a capital box, it is, I promise you—it is, upon my life and soul.'

Mr. Fitzosborne thanked him very cordially, declaring that the *entrée* to a good box that year was a very valuable privilege to a real lover of music, for that the unusual strength of the company attracted a never-failing crowd to every part of the house. He moreover promised unhesitatingly that if it ever came into his head to part with his favourite brown Ben, Sir James Ridley should be the first person informed of it.

While these civilities were going on, Constance, who was evidently not in very gay spirits, seated herself at the table on which lay the engravings, and inviting Penelope by a glance to follow her, employed herself in turning them over. The minute afterwards, however, she looked up from the examination of chefs-d'œuvre, which at that moment were far from having their usual charm for her, and doing so, encountered, much to her surprise, the eyes of Mr. Fitzosborne fixed upon her. The *surprise* was caused by the fact that she believed the gentleman who now seemed occupied by her, to have been entirely engaged by her brother, Mrs. Hartley, and the two youngest daughters, in the midst of whom he was standing; but though his earnest look made her colour one moment, she forgot it the next, and when immediately afterwards he sat down at the same table, placing himself next to Penelope, she remembered it only enough to think she had been amusingly *soi-disant* in the mistake which led her to appropriate to herself what was probably intended for her friend, or at any rate divided between them.

Whether for her sake or for that of Penelope, it mattered not, but Mr. Fitzosborne, in placing himself before the portfolio, which formed the ostensible object of attraction to the quiet position they had chosen, entered into a conversation so animated on the various objects it suggested, that it was quite impossible for Constance not to listen, and listening, not to be delighted. His taste, his erudition, his recent personal acquaintance with the original paintings from which some of the engravings were taken, and with the scenery represented by others, rendered him a very agreeable and profitable exhibitor of the treasures they were examining. It was, indeed, impossible not to listen to him both with interest and admiration; and despite the state of her heart, the half hour thus passed was to Constance nearly the only agreeable interval she had enjoyed since her arrival. Yet when the portfolio had been gone through, and Penelope, thinking it discreet to follow her mother, who had long ago left the room, rose to do so, Constance, instead of being grateful for the gratification she had enjoyed, sighed heavily because it had not come from the quarter whence alone she wished should flow all the joys of her future existence, and felt almost equally out of humour with herself for being pleased, and with Mr. Fitzosborne for pleasing her.

She sighed, too, poor girl! to think, as she passed through the crowd upon which they again entered, how soon, how very soon, the intense gratification of looking at the illustrious individuals whom she had so languished to behold, had worn off. For now again she saw, and perhaps somewhat proudly recognized many of the individuals who had been pointed out and named to her on the preceding Monday.

'O, what a *fool* and peasant slave am I!' she mentally exclaimed, 'that I should have thus permitted myself to be metamorphosed from a reasonable being, capable of estimat-

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ing at their worth the glorious phalanx that I have met with here, into a love-sick girl, as moon-struck as the silly Silvius.

"All made of fantasy,
All made of wishes,
All humbleness, all patience, and impatience,"

and that too for one who, as it seems—and that too for one whom I have known, but—O fool, fool, fool! how I despise myself, and deprecate the fatality that thus enslaves me!'

Such was the by-no-means-pleasing soliloquy with which poor Constance regaled herself as she walked up the room, scarcely hearing, and not at all answering, anything which Mr. Fitzosborne, who walked at her side, addressed to her. Yet Constance was unjust to the benignity of her destiny, if not to herself; for had she been less prompt to fancy that the first awakening of her imagination was what must decide her fate for ever, it is extremely probable that she might have returned to the obscure shades of Appleby without the glory of being cited as having been one of the fair throng, adoring and adored by the fastidious Mortimer.

Certainly Constance *was* ungrateful to her destiny, for, even at the very moment when she was thus lamenting her miserable condition, she was the object of envy to more than one fair creature, who guessed not the self-reproaches which were going on at her heart.

'How excessively that Miss Ridley is admired!' cried Miss Azura Bell to her cousin Miss Indigoby. 'It is perfectly absurd, and perfectly unintelligible—or, at least it would be, had we not by this time learned to know how completely novelty outvalues every other charm. That girl, Euphrosyne, with her pale face and heavy dark hair, is no more to be compared to you, with your heavenly auburn tresses, (so exactly like Titian's mistress,) than I to Hercules, and yet to see the pitiable blindness of that besotted Mortimer! Do you know, it seems to me as if he had positively taken a draught from Circe's cup. "Who knows not Circe, daughter of the sun?' and that the Apollo-like head we used to worship has been changed into some grovelling shape, as wolf or bear,

"Or ounce, or tiger, hog, or bearded goat:"

for how else can we account, with any show of reason, for his instant adoration of this obscure girl the moment she appears? while you, dearest Euphrosyne, have, for three years of matchless constancy, betrayed your love in vain!'

'Azura!' returned the lady thus addressed, in the deep Siddonian tone that gives to every syllable a whole volume of meaning—'Azura! were it not that all comparisons are idle as the wanton wind that mocks the blossom that it plays upon, I might allude to the incredible superiority of your own soft, silken, flaxen locks, and wild-rose tinted skin, as compared to those of the untutored rustic that has just passed by. But leave we such profitless discourse, and let me rather soothe my too-much-wounded spirit by reminding you that the love I have (too freely you may think perhaps,) betrayed, has never been of the kind which a woman of refinement would fear to own. We literary people, dear Azura, must not, cannot, and, in fact, *are* not judged by the same laws which regulate the social intercourse of any other class. When an accomplished and susceptible woman, full of talent herself, and adoring it in others—when such a one, Azura, meets with a man like Mortimer, there is nothing but glory can accrue from her laying her very heart and soul in the dust before him!'

'Assuredly, Miss Indigoby, assuredly,' replied Miss Bell, 'you need address no defence to me for adoring Henry Mortimer; my weakness, if such it be, for the gifted author of the cyclopedia of modern morals, the divine Sir Everard, is a sufficient guarantee for my decided approbation of feelings at once so natural and so noble! But is it not provoking to see how every eyeglass is turned towards that odious girl; and she, probably, knowing no more of literature and the literary world than our washerwoman! Alas, Euphrosyne! the path in which, with so much difficulty, we have obtained permission to tread, is not strewed with roses only! But turn a little this way, will you? There is Sir Everard! and if we can contrive to pass close to him, I should not wonder if he were to bow to us.'

* * * * *

The progress of the trio who were in search of Mrs. Hartley brought them of necessity within a few feet of the canopied recess in which poor Constance had left all her light-heartedness. She had determined before she reached it that she positively would not look aside to see if Mortimer were still seated there beside the delicate white lady, whose figure seemed to be impressed upon her imagination as if the mark had been left by red-hot steel. She might as well have determined, poor girl! not to draw breath after holding her head under water for five minutes, and finding herself again within reach of the air. And there he was, exactly as she had left him, the lady reclining in an attitude of more than ease, for it approached wonderfully near that of absolute repose, and the poet reclining too in an angle that so nearly followed hers, as to bring his eloquent lips at a very convenient distance from her ear; the only difference in the group being, that when she had looked at it last, the little girl was looking animated and pretty, and that now she was yawning violently, and evidently in great danger of falling fast asleep.

At the moment that the vanquished eye of Constance yielded to the temptation of turning to see if Mr. Mortimer were still where she had left him, Mr. Fitzosborne was in the act of explaining to her the particular claim upon her attention contained in a small knot

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of gentlemen who were congregated together beside a pier table near which they passed. His manner had considerable animation in it, occasioned by the fact that the most conspicuous of the persons he was pointing out to her notice had been one theme of the conversation they had just held together in the boudoir, and, being of those who the more rarely indulge the eye of curiosity by emerging from the learned leisure of their distant retreats, he was anxious that she should take advantage of an opportunity which might not again occur of looking in the face of the most original of England's poets, the bard of the mountain and the lake, who seeks his inspiration only from the majestic scenes amid which he was born, and from the heaven that bends over them. Even at that moment, though it was an anxious and a painful one, the ear of Constance was not deaf to the name of Rydal, and, having given the glance which showed her what she did not particularly wish to see, she turned eagerly to gaze on what she did.

Had she been the most practical coquette in London, she could have done nothing more likely to produce precisely the effect she would have most desired, had she ventured to form a wish about it, than thus letting the animation of her own manner respond to that of Mr. Fitzosborne. Mortimer started from the place where he reposed, and was at her side in an instant, when with an insidious friendliness of familiarity in which he was peculiarly skilful, he ventured to separate the two ladies, and place himself between them.

Mr. Fitzosborne watched the manœuvre with a quiet smile, and as he turned his eyes towards the intruder as he civilly saluted him with 'How do you do, Mr. Mortimer?' he caught sight of the lady who still preserved unchanged her attitude on the canopied sofa.

Whoever this lady might be, it seemed as if she were placed in the conspicuous situation she occupied on purpose to display her power of contesting the influence of the admired Miss Ridley, for, no sooner had she been descried by Fitzosborne, than he too forsook the side of Constance, to place himself near her.

Constance, however, saw it not; but Penelope did, and, turning with renewed interest to look at a person apparently as attractive as she certainly was remarkable, she observed that the manner of Mr. Fitzosborne, in addressing her, was both familiar and affectionate, and that even the sleepy little rosebud looked up as he approached with a smile that restored all her prettiness.

'Who can they be?' thought Penelope. 'It is long since I have seen any one concerning whom I have felt so much curiosity —I will inquire of Mr. Mortimer as soon as he seems likely to hear me.'

But of this there appeared not to be any immediate chance. Never had the soul of the poet spoken with more fervid eloquence from his eyes than at this moment, as he looked at Constance and listened to her, as if every other object in creation were unworthy to withdraw his attention from her for a single instant.

The heart of Constance fluttered in her bosom, and a soft, slight blush mantled on her cheek. She was certainly less sad than she had been; yet, somehow or other, the *exigéante* beauty was not quite satisfied either. Beyond all doubt, she wished Mr. Mortimer to be in love with her; but she would have preferred his showing less uncertainty upon the matter by his long absence, and less demonstration of its vehement existence on his return.

The gentlest smiles, however, were once more taking place of the pensive air which seemed to have settled on her beautiful brow, when once again the puzzling Mortimer started from her side, and once again proved that she was not the only lady who could elicit from him that touching earnestness of manner which, contrasted with the somewhat studied languor of his ordinary tone, was felt to be so irresistibly flat ering.

Not Constance herself indeed, no, nor the fairest of the rival goddesses who beset Paris, could have produced more exulting joy by suddenly appearing before him, than did the lady he now addressed, and at whose feet he seemed longing to throw himself.

Despite her curiosity, there was a strong mixture of vexation in the feelings of Constance at being obliged, by the accidental crowd in the door-way through which they were going to pass, to stop short, exactly as she might have done had she actually intended to wait for Mr. Mortimer. 'How excessively disagreeable the crowd is!' she said to Penelope. 'There is Mrs Hartley beckoning to us; how I wish we could get to her!'

But for the moment the doing so was absolutely impossible, and so her friend told her; they were, therefore, by stern necessity obliged to remain where they were; and equally impossible was it for Constance not to see the delicate epitome of modish elegance before which Mr. Mortimer still stood as if in ecstasy.

The lady, who was delicately fair—an advantage which was *relevé* by the very slightest and most uncertain *soupçon* of rouge—was a line or two perhaps above the middle height, and of a form peculiarly light and flexible. Her dress was perfect, the costliness of it being forgotten in its seeming simplicity—*seeming*, inasmuch as, despite the soft harmony in colour and decoration, which, like proportion in architecture, caused the parts to be overlooked in admiration of the whole, there was not a component particle of it, no, not even a pin or a stitch, which had not been matter of grave concern to the Frenchwoman who furnished it, and the Frenchwoman who put it on.

But striking, fascinating, as her appearance certainly was, it was almost forgotten in the interest inspired (at least in the

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breast of Constance) by the gentle sweetness of manner with which she received the animated address of Mortimer. It was impossible, had she wished it ever so earnestly, for Constance to avoid hearing what passed; for the pressure of the crowd, which was now, for some reason or other, endeavouring to make its way to the inner room, had absolutely obliged Penelope and herself almost to follow the steps of Mr. Mortimer.

'Is it possible?—may I believe my eyes?—what heavenly kindness!' exclaimed the poet.

'Yes, it was possible, just possible, my friend—and that explains it, does it not?—no more was necessary,' were the words uttered in reply, and in a voice of such silver sound, that the effect produced by her appearance was rendered absolutely irresistible by it, and Constance was charmed into forgetfulness of all vexation as she looked and listened.

'Who is that elegant woman, Penelope, to whom Mr. Mortimer is now speaking?' she whispered cautiously in the ear of her friend.

Miss Hartley had turned away her head on purpose to avoid seeing her; for although by no means particularly sensitive as to the apparent likings or dislikings of the mere acquaintance met during the various visitings of a London season, Penelope had a sort of affronted feeling about this individual lady, which led her rather to avoid than seek a recognition. Thus challenged, however, she replied, in the same tone, 'It is Mrs. Gardener Stewart.'

To Constance, however, the name conveyed no information; she had never heard it before; but as she again ventured to look at her, she caught the lady's eye fixed upon herself, and the next moment, to her unspeakable astonishment, saw her approach smilingly towards her, supported on the arm of Mr. Mortimer.

'Miss Ridley,' said the poet, 'Mrs. Gardener Stewart requests the pleasure of being made known to you.'

Nothing so well supplies the place of that *usage du monde* which renders every new incident only a new opportunity of displaying grace, as the union of youth and beauty with perfect simplicity of manner. By the help of these, Constance passed through the ordeal she was unconsciously undergoing very favourably—more so, certainly, than would have been the case, had she been aware that, in order to oblige Henry Mortimer, this elegant personage had abandoned her sofa with the feelings of a martyr, solely to look at her, and to pass judgment on her claims to the immortal honour of becoming, for the time being, the chosen object of the poet's sighs.

'An angel!' whispered Mrs. Gardener Stewart into the ear of her friend. 'I will be your willing slave in this.'

Then addressing Constance in her very 'sweetest' manner, she said, 'I shall feel particular pleasure, Miss Ridley, in being permitted to make your acquaintance. I am a very quiet person, and not capable, I fear, of being very useful; but if you will have the kindness to let me see you in Grosvenor Place, you will make me very happy.'

She then slightly noticed Miss Hartley by a bow, and entered into a little murmuring chit-chat with Constance, during which Mr. Mortimer stood silent, but hanging upon every word that passed as if his life hung upon the result.

Suddenly Mrs. Gardener Stewart seemed to catch sight of some object that strongly and painfully affected her nerves. A slight trembling movement appeared to run through her frame, she pressed her hand upon her heart, breathed a sigh that sounded like the groan of a sylph, and, clinging to the arm of Mr. Mortimer, uttered in an audible whisper the words 'Save me!' He asked for no explanation, but, giving Constance a farewell look that evidently spoke a great deal more than she could understand, he hastened to lead Mrs. Gardener Stewart from the room as rapidly as the crowded state of it would permit.

The startled Constance looked in the direction from whence had proceeded the cause of alarm, whatever it might be, which had thus driven away her elegant new friend, and perceived Lady Dort approaching in high spirits, dressed with more studious attention to display than ever, and talking with inconceivable animation to at least three men of genius at once.

'Who *is* Mrs. Gardener Stewart?' said Constance to her friend.

'The most impertinent woman in London, my dear,' replied Penelope.

'The most impertinent!' reiterated the astonished Constance;—'oh! say, rather, the most captivating!'

CANZONET.

BY MAJOR CALDER CAMPBELL.

I.

Oh, no! we were ne'er made for sighing!
'Tis the bigot, or fool, that repines;
We should shoot Pleasure's quarry while flying,
And bask in the sun when it shines.
Then doff that dark wreath from your beaver,
We want not the yew's sombre gloom,
Nor the willow that mourns the deceiver,
Nor cypress, that nods o'er the tomb.

II.

The garland must all be of roses,
Fresh plucked from those bowers of delight,

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Where the girl you adore gathers posies,
To strew on her pillow at night!
Oh! who would complain of dull sorrow
In a world so enchantingly fair?
Let us rather from ecstasy borrow
The spells that can banish despair.

III.

You may weep, it is true, but the gushes
That flow from your eyes, must be dew
From the torrent of laughter, that rushes
Unchecked through festivity's crew;
And if your breast heave, let your sighing
Be whispered on rosebeds of rest;
When your song—with the nightingale's vying—
Is breathed to the maid you love best!

THE IDIOT SAILOR-BOY.

BY EDWARD HOWARD, AUTHOR OF 'RATTLIN THE REEFER,' &c.

In the many changes that numerous deaths and invalidings caused both with officers and men in the squadron always stationed in the West Indies, it was seldom that a ship's company remained a long time together, as a whole, and consisting of nearly the same persons. It was one of the vicissitudes of this sort that had thrown Christopher Crosstrees, the elderly quartermaster, Knocketty Nick, and Lieutenant Chivers together on board of her Majesty's ship Belinda.

We make no apology for having placed the gallant lieutenant last. In regal and imperial processions, where the greatest honour is intended to be lavished, is always on the spot occupied most in the rear. Almost all nations have naturally, and, as it were unconsciously, fallen into this practice. There is no doubt a latent and a very instructive reason for this; a reason upon which a modern philosopher might build a very excellent theory of morality, politics, religion, or of anything that might be wanted at any particular time. The world must see how generous I am, thus to scatter forth for fructification the seeds of such valuable hypotheses—hypotheses that, if rightly worked, might make the fortune of a clever bookseller, or hatch a bungling bookworm into the literary butterfly of the passing hour.

It was nearly four years since these three worthies just mentioned first met, for worthy they all certainly were, in their different ways. We will, however, give the preference to the idiot. Idiots, not being able to take care of themselves, have always been put under the especial care of Heaven by their brother men, as some apology for the latter abandoning them to poverty and privation, if poor; to the tender mercies of madhouse-keepers and their brutalized train, if born to riches. Whom Heaven thus favours, so will we.

Young Knocketty Nick was a youth not favoured by Providence with a frame the most athletic, or a constitution the most robust, and this the surgeon of the tender, stationed off the Tower of London, discovered, when he presented himself as a volunteer in the height of the last war.

He was, at that period, nearly sixteen years of age; tall, slight, and gracefully formed; of a delicate and singularly-handsome countenance, and possessed a soft blue eye, that could flash at times with all the gentle enthusiasm of the poet. When he first stepped on board he looked frightened as a caged hare, yet was he resolute in his mind, and very obstinate in keeping his secret of who he was, whence he came, or why he had offered his majesty his youthful services. What he most seemed to dread were, pursuit and discovery. He called himself John Brown.

His well-bred address, the goodness of his apparel, though entirely suited to a lad, the whiteness and softness of his hands, his long taper fingers, and his well-trimmed nails, made people suppose that he had been some newly-installed clerk who, not being able to resist the temptations of petty cash, had plundered his master's desk, or embezzled some money with which he had been too early entrusted. He had brought with him nothing but a bag, but whether it were one legally appertaining to a lawyer's clerk, or it was only a schoolboy's satchel, the seamen were not sufficiently informed to determine. It contained the remains of some plum-cake, a Greek Lexicon, a Latin Horace, a small-tooth comb, a toothbrush, and several pieces of paper of various sizes, most of them covered over with writings, in a neat and stiff hand, the lines of which writings rarely extended to the right-hand margin of the paper.

What all these indicated, the rough denizens of the tender took no trouble to ascertain. His name, as he gave it, was registered in the books; he was duly victualled by the purser, and furnished with the necessary slops; he couldn't swallow the latter, for young ladies must understand that it is the term used for the clothing outfit of a sailor, and his hammock being slung for him, he was then delivered over to the parental care of the master-at-arms.

In a few days he was drafted down to the guardship at the Nore, but how he got there and what was there done to him, and around him, for some time, the poor lad could not comprehend. He was not only bewildered, but as much stupified as if his senses had been paralyzed by the sudden explosion of ten thousand bombs. He scarcely ate or drank. He slept not at all, yet was he never fully awake. When roused from his stupor, he was spoken to in a language he did not understand, and he felt that, in his turn, he had not the power of making himself understood.

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Cast among the outpourings of the sewers of society, never approached without an execration, or jostled without a curse, thrust here and kicked there, he doubted that he lived but in a hideous dream; he stretched and yawned, and was continually making those efforts with which people attempt to awaken themselves when they are conscious that they are labouring under the agony of a night-mare.

At that time the insatiate jaws of war were clamouring eternally for food. The increasing cry was for men, men. Nothing in the shape of humanity which could pull a rope or stand at a gun, was refused. The cat-o-nine-tails made the incompetent, competent; or it destroyed them. The sea-breeze cured the sick or killed. The weaver was taken from his loom, the farmer from his plough, and the criminal from the jail. The babbling schoolboy was hardly too young, the sexagenarian scarcely too old. All 'food for powder,' as Jack Falstaff says, and men with whom honest Jack would have been ashamed to have marched through Coventry, were bundled by hundreds to do good service—and they did it—on board his majesty's vessels of war.

Hurrah! there is something in the blood of Englishmen that, even when running through the veins of vagabonds and ragamuffins never loses the true British smack of the heroic. Some of our most glorious battles have been gained by the very refuse of society, and, strange as it may appear, a cockney, if he can but outlive the seasoning, always turns out a smart and active sailor, never proving too heavy to fly up aloft, and was always strong enough to do a strong man's duty at the gun-tackles.

John Brown, as he was then called, had not been long in this floating den, containing so many variations of the horrible, before he was ranged on her decks, with about a hundred others, in order to be selected by a captain who was picking to complete his crew. Placed between two carbuncled burly drunken swabs, he looked more than usually effeminate. His delicate cheeks were pallid, his eyes red with weeping, and altogether he appeared more fitting to be near a mother or a sister, than to form one of the complement of a man-of-war.

At length the scrutinizing captain, attended by a ferret-eyed first lieutenant, addressed John Brown.

'Well, my lad; ever been to sea?'

'No, sir,' said John, blushing through his tears.

'Come, cheer up; we will soon make a man of you. Are you pressed, or did you volunteer?'

'I came of my own accord, sir; because I couldn't—'

'Because what? don't be alarmed, my boy; speak out.'

'Because I could not put up with the disgrace of being flogged, sir, at my age.'

'Out of the frying pan into the fire,' said the ferret-eyed first. 'He had better be cut for the simples, sir; to run on board a man-a-war to escape flogging! We had better go on to the next. He'll die of the pip, depend on't, sir."

'Not so hasty, Mr. Mizen. There may be good stuff in the youth yet. There is always good to be hoped from those who are sensitive to disgrace. Pray, my lad, may I ask you who was going to flog you, and what you were to be flogged for? Don't tell me unless you like.'

'Doctor Cosine, my schoolmaster; and I only handed a copy of verses to his daughter Euphemia.'

"There you now, Mr. Mizen,' said the captain, turning to his officer, 'here are the very elements of which heroes are made. Ambitious, bold of heart, disdaining dishonour. I dare say the verses were of your own composing.'

'They were indeed, sir,' replied the lad colouring up with pride, and regaining his animation. 'I should be most happy to have the honour of reciting them to you.'

'Not now, my good boy. I select this lad, Mr. Mizen. Let him be kindly treated, and looked after with gentleness.'

'Ay, ay, sir,' said the formal lieutenant. 'Get your bag, and prepare for a start, younker.'

In a few hours Brown found himself on board the Polyphemus, a round tub of a sixty-four, and in a few days on his passage to the West Indies.

Now two heavy misfortunes fell upon the young volunteer. The first was, that the lieutenant had conceived a dislike to him; vulgarly and forcibly called taken a spite against him; that was dreadful enough in a place so despotic as a man-of-war: but the second was still more disastrous—poor Brown had utterly mistaken his calling. He was not a coward in any sense of the word but one, but that one was all-important—he had never sufficient nerve to go aloft.

At every attempt to force him up the rigging, he screamed, he shrieked wildly, he wrestled, and even fought with those urging him. He was rope's-ended almost to fainting repeatedly, but no cruelty could make him resign his delirious grasp of the rattlins. It was piteous to listen to the eloquence of his supplications, to hear the deep pathos of his prayers. Even the hard hearts of the flogging boatswain's mates could not bear it, and they often stayed their uplifted hands.

I can very well conceive that Cæsar himself might draw back looking over a precipice, with his blood thrilling at the depth beneath, and the Duke of Wellington might hesitate to walk along the coping-stone of a four-storied house without any imputation on his courage. However, there was but little consideration shown to John. He was judged to be chicken-hearted, and the judgment went far to make him so. There is but one panacea for all faults and all vices in the navy. Or rather it was so. Punishment was to do everything. Its omnipotence, however, failed in the case of the

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reputed poltroon. The more that he was flogged, the more nervous he became. Doctor Cosine's most energetic flagellations would have been but a pleasant titillation compared to the flesh-ploughing tortures that he received. Still, he went not aloft, unless he was hoisted by the means of a rope.

Mr. Mizen gloried in the truth of his prognostics. He had always said that the craven would turn out not to be worth his salt; and, lo! he was right. Did any one doubt his assertion, he flogged the youth again, and then turned to the incredulous and said, 'You see even that won't get him aloft.'

Captain Dignum became a confirmed invalid, and was too much occupied with his own sufferings to remember his promise of protection to the delicate and well-favoured youth whom he had selected on board of the Namur. The surgeon sometimes interfered and remonstrated; but all this display of humanity Mr. Mizen took very ill. He would listen to nothing about vertigo, palpitation of the heart, or disarrangement of the nervous system. He maintained that men-of-war's boys had no other business with nerves excepting to make them taste the cat more acutely. Besides, it was a bad example. The same constitutional excuse put forward for John Brown would equally serve every man and boy in the ship, and pray who would then furl the top-gallant sails, or reef the top-sails? Thus there was no chance for our school-boy who made verses, but illness. So he fell ill.

Before he was thus fortunate, the prostration of his mind had been completed. Though no coward, he had been effectually cowed. At first he had fought his battle manfully with his juvenile compeers. But each day he grew mentally and physically weaker. The smallest urchin in the ship at last slapped his face in all the insolence of pride, and he was kicked aside by all who met him as something too ignominious to be spoken to.

And was there no pity for him in this numerous and not ungenerous crew? Yes, there was much, but they who taxed him with cowardice, were themselves too cowardly to rise above the prejudice of feeling for the timid. Honestly, we think that fear, under some disguise or another, is the leading principle of almost all human actions. Were there no fear in the world, there could be no tyranny, and there would be much more love.

Humiliated into an abject thing, John Brown dissimulated. He now always professed to be ill. The humane surgeon of the ship, if he did not countenance, certainly made no comments on this deception, but threw about the victim of oppression and prejudice the protection of the sick-list. The first lieutenant, Mr. Mizen, grew furious, the two officers quarrelled, and would no longer speak to each other; but the man of medicine conquered the man of authority, for he brought so many Latin terms and technical descriptions, rank and file, into the battle, that his antagonist was obliged to retreat before the storm of words.

Though Mr. Mizen was defeated on the quarter-deck, he managed to effect a skilful retreat into the captain's cabin, and there took up a fresh position. He represented to the declining commander that John Brown had turned out, as he had predicted, a mean-spirited cur, not worth his salt, that he was too cowardly to go aloft, and he assured Captain Dignum, upon his honour, and with his hand upon his heart, that it was no fault of his, Mr. Mizen, for, to use his own expression, 'he had nearly cut his soul out.'

Captain Dignum shuddered. Perhaps the cold hand of disease was upon his vitals, perhaps the shock of remorse passed through his heart, or it might have been from the fear of death—for even the British sailor may be permitted to dread the lingering dissolution of consumption.

'I am in pain, Mr. Mizen,' was the captain's feeble reply. 'Send my compliments to Mr. Mortimer, and say that I should be happy to see him, and pray don't interfere with the poor lad until you have my further orders.'

Mr. Mizen went on deck, looking like a thunder-cloud with a flash of lightning at the back of it. 'Here, quartermaster, d—n you, go down and tell the surgeon the captain orders him into the cabin immediately. Officer of the watch! Pray, sir, do you call these sails trimmed in a seaman-like manner? Get a pull at the main brace directly.'

'The mark is down, sir.'

'D—n the mark, sir, and obey orders.'

'Did you d—n me, sir?' replies his brother lieutenant, reddening about the gills like an inflamed turkey-cock.

'No, sir, I did not.' Then after a long and sarcastic pause, 'D—n you!' with great emphasis, 'no occasion for that.' Then casting his eyes aloft superciliously, he again comes to the attack. 'Look, sir, at the weather leach of the foretopsail. Let go the foretop bow-line, and get a bouse at the lift. Look upon all these as reprimands, sir. You tinkering quartermaster—the ship is two points off the wind. By the immortal powers of broomsticks! I'll stop your grog for a week.'

How much longer he would have continued in his system of general annoyance it is impossible to say, had not his favourite come on deck. Your domineerers have always a favourite.

They join each other. 'The world has come to a pretty pass,' says Mr. Mizen to his crony, 'and the service is going to the dogs, Here's that pedantic blood-letter and pill-maker, the doctor, backing the ship's company in malignering, and the skipper aids and abets him.'

'What's in the wind now, Mr. Mizen?' said the sycophant.

'Oh! there's the devil to pay, and no pitch hot, and we are all on the wrong tack, if we don't try our hand at snivelling. That along-shore shammer boy Brown is growing sleek

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and comely like a young lady, and the doctor, and be d——d to him, keeps him on the sick list, I really believe, to spite me.'

'Well, Mr. Mizen, you know what to do. Make the doctor taste the peasoup every day, and go into the coppers in the galley every morning, and wipe their bottoms with a white cambric handkerchief, which he is afterwards bound to bring and show you. O, I'd annoy him—I would.'

'And I will, by G—d! But there's one comfort left. The skipper will soon slip his wind, and then I'll pitch him to the sharks, and give myself an acting order as captain, and bring up all standing with a taut hand. Let those I don't like stand clear. Scaldings!'

This may be deemed strange phraseology, but it was the current quarter-deck one some forty years ago, generally used by men of education, and who knew how to converse. The brutal it only the more brutified. Yet we would not quarrel with naval metaphors, for when used judiciously, not over-abundantly, and combined with gentlemanly conversation, they not only render discourse energetic, but graceful also. But, when every sentence is redolent of tar, and it possesses no other redeeming quality, the dialogue of a mere saltwater swab is, after a little while, always wearisome, and too often disgusting.

The interview between the captain and the surgeon was long, and not without painful interest to both. Its results were beneficial to John Brown, as he was immediately installed in the cabin as Captain Dignum's private attendant. The hitherto ill-used lad was now in a situation that caused him to appear all grace, sweetness, and even superiority. He became head nurse. I might make his conduct and his conversation one of the principal features of this short story. Though thinking that he lay on his deathbed, the old warrior was soothed into tranquillity by the boy's gentleness, and the riches of his well-cultured mind.

Of course the runaway schoolboy disclosed to his new patron all that he knew of his real history. Captain Dignum determined to take the necessary means to restore him to his friends after his own death, though he had made up his mind, should he, against all probability, recover, to retain his protégé in the service, and always near his own person.

Brown had not long been a denizen of the cabin, before it became hinted about the ship that he was a young gentleman. Nobody had discovered this before, and now the first lieutenant would not allow it. Our opinions of gentlemen are singular. We hold that gentility may be achieved, but with difficulty, but very easily lost indeed. Had Mr. Mizen been born to it, in all probability he would have lost it; but, not inheriting it by birth, nor having acquired it by a liberal education, most certainly, that he should ever acquire it was really a matter of despair. But he was a valuable man in his station—a thorough seaman, a sufficient navigator, at once brave and sagacious—but, with all this, anything but a gentleman.

Now, the lad whom Mizen so much despised was not a gentleman by inheritance, yet, by the gift of the Great Disposer of all our best attributes, was he a gentleman of the highest and rarest order, although he was afraid to go aloft, and never, perhaps, would have made a sailor. The result of all this was, that the oppressor could not in his heart despise the oppressed so much as he desired, consequently he hated him the more. Thus Mizen's contempt ripened into dislike, and when the contempt wore away, it was replaced by a deep and settled aversion. The human heart, that vortex of iniquity, hates more often and more strongly for virtues than for vices.

John Brown was now dressed, though not in uniform, in a manner something between the cabin-boy and the gentleman, and he soon recovered his remarkable personal advantages. He was seldom on deck, nor would he have repaired thither at all, had he not been compelled by his dying friend for the sake of air. Of course the quarter-deck was not open to him as a promenade, and his reception on the forecastle would have been very doubtful. But the careful captain had foreseen all this, and every evening after mustering at quarters, he would send his compliments to Mr. Mizen, and desire him to permit John Brown to walk for an hour on deck, abaft the mizen-mast, *unmolested*.

'The world has come to a pretty pass, and the service is going to the dogs,' used the first-lieutenant to growl forth whenever he received this order. 'I'll catch him on the ground hop yet, a favour-currying bone-polisher.'

So the youth always passed him with the humblest looks, and paced his little walk with downcast eyes and a frightened demeanour, his enemy all the time eyeing him with the ferocity of a hyena, seeking for some pretence to pounce upon him.

'I shall never see land again, doctor,' said the captain faintly, as he reclined in his dressing-gown upon the sofa. 'The increasing heat of the climate seems only to add to my lassitude, without at all relieving the difficulty of my breathing. I think that I should have lasted longer in my own damp, cold, foggy, yet all-beloved country. How I pine to die upon her soil!'

'I never thought,' was the reply, 'that warm latitudes were beneficial in pulmonary complaints.'

'Why then was I so strenuously, almost so universally, advised to repair to them?'

'No one likes a patient to die under his hands. My candid advice to you is, that you should transfer yourself to the first homewardbound ship that we may meet, and hasten to the south of England. Consumption annually makes great ravages in the West Indies, and a very large number of fever cases terminate in that fatal disease. When

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I say fatal, I am far from thinking it to be incurable. Of course, whenever a pulmonary complaint terminates in death, it is called consumption—therefore consumption is pronounced incurable, and that is the whole secret of the matter. Should the sufferer recover, there is a great choice of names for the disorder, but consumption will not be one of them. It is most certain that people have recovered under every form and type of diseased lungs—therefore, prostrated as you now are, Captain Dignum, by this ill-advised seeking of hot climates, your case is not hopeless.'

'You are a cheerful prophet, Mortimer; but you think that all hope of cure for me depends upon my immediate return to England?'

'Decidedly so. You have been growing rapidly worse as we have made southing. When you first came on board, your complaint was hardly discernible to others, however it may have been apparent to yourself. Go home, go home immediately, and I believe that many years of happiness and of health may yet be ensured to you. Go home for the sake of others, if not for your own.'

'Indeed, dear Mortimer, I have much to make me wish to live. I have realized but little property in my profession, and it is singularly unfortunate that on my surviving an uncle depends the inheriting of my family of a large, a magnificent estate. I have but one son, and nine daughters. Should my uncle die before me, I shall have nothing to wish for to my family on the score of wealth—should I die first, that dear family nothing to hope for.'

'Then go home at once, even if it cost you your commission,' said the benevolent surgeon eagerly.

'Ah me! The temptation is great, but without disobeying my orders, the act is impossible to me. You would not have me put the ship's head round, and make at once for the Land's End,' replied the captain, with that sickly smile which is meant to amuse, but which only the more betrays the bitterness that is in the soul.

'Why, that, certainly, would be rather too strong a measure.'

'And here we are, rapidly nearing Barbadoes, and totally out of the course of homeward-bound vessels. Should I survive to reach that island, my chance of a passage to England would be but small;—no, I have but one chance—to haul immediately to the northward, and get into the track of vessels making for Europe.'

'Then do this, dear captain—let me conjure you, for the sake of your family. The strongest certificate that words can form shall justify the act to the Admiralty. Pray give the order immediately.'

'Give me but a short time to reflect.'

Captain Dignum then lay back on his sofa, and closed his eyes; but the hot tears distilled rapidly through the lids;—the affections were battling in his heart against his sense of duty.

The surgeon took hold of Brown's hand, for Brown had been present during the whole of this scene, and led him into the after cabin, that the captain might be conscious that there was no witness to his emotion.

'Come here, John,' said the good surgeon. 'You have observed all that has taken place. Do you understand it?'

'I am afraid I do, sir. Here is this dear good captain will die if he persists in going to Jamaica; and if he dies, his large family will be reduced to poverty.'

'Clearly so. He never should have left England. It is my conviction that, had he stayed at home, he would have conquered his complaint. The symptoms of his disease, even now, are not mortal, but they will prove so in this debilitating climate.'

'If he dies,' says Brown, 'it will break my heart—I am sure it will. There will not be much left for Mr. Mizen to do. I hope people so young as I can die of a broken heart. It would be so pleasant to die that way for dear Captain Dignum.'

'You are a good boy, I am sure; but do you not think it would be much more pleasant for the captain to live to be your friend, and you to live to be grateful to him? Now I believe that he would have a very good chance of living if he would go home.'

'O, I'm so glad! Then why don't he? He is captain of the ship, and he can do as he likes. Why don't he go home, sir?'

'Because he conceives it to be his duty to go forward and die. He has his orders, no doubt, to repair without delay to the admiral, at Port Royal, in Jamaica. He must have despatches on board—no ship going foreign goes without them; he may think them to be, he may know them to be, important; therefore his sense of duty tells him, come weal, come woe, be it for life, or be it for death, I must push on for my destination.'

'But, sir,' said the lad, modestly, and with much hesitation, 'I heard you implore him not to go, but to return, for the sake of his family. So good a gentleman would not ask him not to do his duty.'

'My duty and his diverge into different paths. I have only to watch over his health, and the health of all under my care. Ah! John Brown, when you have lived a little longer you will learn the harsh lesson, that our existence is sorely troubled with conflicting duties. Now, our dear captain has great and sacred duties towards his young family, and duties almost as sacred towards himself. After what I have disclosed to him, if he persists in his voyage he connives at his own death, and more than half commits suicide. Thus, if he returns to live and bless his family, he will be a good man; if he go forward and die, he will be a hero.'

Our young gentleman fell into deep thought for some time, and he seemed to be sadly puzzled. At length his countenance

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brightened up, and he said cheerfully, 'Pray, sir, may I take the liberty to ask if most good men or most heroes go to heaven?'

The surgeon smiled faintly, and replied, 'It is a strange, but an acute question. I am decidedly of opinion that the good men have the best chance. Indeed, if all that be said of heroes be true, they are much more likely to mess with Dives than to club with Lazarus in the next world.'

'Then,' said John, right joyfully, 'the captain must go home first, and to heaven afterwards.'

'I wish you could persuade him,' was the almost despondent reply.

Brown retired, and thus the surgeon soliloquized when he found himself alone;—'The boy may prevail, for he has wormed himself into the heart of the sick man, but very much I doubt it. What sensible man would pursue that ghastly phantom, glory? Now, this dying man will be more heroic in his self-sacrifice than any hard-headed brute who leads the boarders when the chances are a thousand to one against him. Poor Dignum, with his death-warrant signed, and continually waving before his eyes, if he take one path; oppressed by sickness, and all his nerves unstrung; and yet, with his faculty of judgment more strong than ever, his home affections more vivid, in that fatal path will persevere. And what will be his reward? A tomb in Westminster Abbey, or a statue in St. Paul's? No, these are reserved for those who go blindly to logger-heads, and get their own broken for their stupidity. But will not his name be recorded in history, and particularly honoured in his own country; and will not that grateful country bestow upon his son a title, and wealth upon his family? Not a bit of it. But what will happen to him for this noble self-immolation? If he should die before he reaches port, he will be sewed up in his hammock, and thrown to the sharks in less than forty-eight hours afterwards, for your tropical sun has no respect for your aristocratical carcass; and I am sure the man Mizen, with the ferret's eyes, will be right glad to read the funeral service first, and immediately after to read himself into the vacancy, upon the acting order that he will have given to himself.

'On the other hand, supposing that he reaches Barbadoes, or even Jamaica, will not things mend? Not much. He will then have a more decent burial on shore. A few brother officers will attend him to the grave, and a few blank cartridges will be fired over it, and master Mizen will be disappointed in dressing himself in a little brief authority. Glory would be a good thing if fairly shared.

'Whether he depart this life on shore or afloat, all the notice that glory will take of him will be a paragraph in the papers, for one day, that Captain Daniel Dignum, R. N., died on his passage to Port Royal, when in command of H.M.S. Polyphemus, very much lamented by his brother officers, (which would be a lie, for the vacancy would give a great number of them a step of promotion,) and by all who knew him. Captain Dignum entered the service, &c. &c.

'I have no patience with this! And will he gain no more by the exalted heroism of his lingering death than this? Not a jot! not a jot! whilst the first rash fool who places his vessel alongside another of superior force, trusting to the courage of his crew to redeem the folly of his conduct, will be all but deified at home, and have his name sung to ballads. Glory! I have not patience with you!

Now, madam Glory, let us suppose that poor Dignum pushes you a little aside to the left, and altering the course of the ship for a week or two, disobeying orders, he gets so far north as to meet with a homeward-bound vessel; he reaches England, recovers his health, inherits his estate, and passes a long old age in all the mellow sunshine of happiness, surrounded by a reverencing and loving family. Glory, after all, you are but an arrant cheat.'

Whilst Mr. Mortimer, in the after-cabin, was thus vexing his soul with these sophistries, not reflecting that, though glory may be but an arbitrary mistress, and thus forfeit our allegiance to her, yet the sovereignty of duty is lawful, and her commands must be imperative upon us;—young Brown was doing his duty, as he thought, in endeavouring to make his friend and commander neglect his.

He had stolen quietly into the fore-cabin, and, ere his entrance had been perceived, he was on his knees beside the captain, weeping over the hand, thin and pallid, of which he had possessed himself. This token of affection the sick man did not at first perceive. He already loved him as a son, and had repeatedly told him so. At length, when the violence of his own sorrow had a little subsided, he said to him affectionately, 'My dear child, you distress me. Not a source of sorrow, but of comfort, would I be to you. When I am no more, you will find that I have taken care of you. Wealth have I none to leave you, nor have I recommended you to my own family. My heart bursts when I think of the fierce struggles they will themselves have to make with an ungenerous world. I have taken the necessary measures which will ensure you, when you reach the admiral, your discharge, and your safe return to your father and your sister.'

To all this, for some time, Brown could only sob violently. At length, in his artless —and powerful, because artless, manner, he attempted to prevail upon his benefactor to return home. We will spare our readers a description of the scene, as it was not only distressing, but harrowing. It was, as might well be supposed, fruitless. That night the ship's course was not altered.

More than one person, as they lay in their cots and their hammocks that night, prayed for a hurricane to drive the Polyphemus well to the northward.

Mr. Mortimer had, by his close attention on his captain, acquired for him a sincere

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affection, and was determined to save him in spite of his obstinacy. Now the good surgeon was not himself without obstinacy, and as this failing was supported by a good deal of talent, he contrived to get for it the respectable title of firmness of purpose. So he took counsel with several of the officers, one forecastle man, and one ship's boy.

Mr. Mizen was in no haste to run down the trades and reach the ship's destination.

He longed to taste the sweets of absolute command for some time, and also to gain the recommendation of having been acting captain, to forward his own chance of being made an actual commander. So he took great care not to carry too much sail in the day-time, and to make all snug every night. He much regretted that there was but little likelihood of seeing any strange sail that would justify him in altering the course and going in chase. His interest, and consequently his object, was delay. He was all day wondering why the captain did not die, and pondering if he should not ask him for an acting order before he was dead.

Now that first lieutenant enjoyed the distinction of being very much disliked, a distinction common to first-lieutenants in general. Mizen, however, was particularly distinguished. Thus, the prospect of his becoming acting captain, even for a very short period, was most appalling to all the other officers, with the exception of his sycophant, the junior lieutenant of the marines. So they often conferred together, in order to discover some means of preventing this calamity. Nothing occurred to them, however, but keeping the captain alive, and to do this they looked to the surgeon.

'Stuff!' said the exasperated medical. 'Here we are drawing towards a vertical sun, and every hour it grows hotter and hotter. At this rate I can't answer for poor Dignum's life for a week; and when he has "shuffled off his mortal coil," the devil help you all out of the coil you will find yourselves in, with him pulling at one end of the tangled rope, and Ferret-eye at the other.'

'What's the use of doctors if they can't cure people?' said the master, rather sullenly.

'Use, old Soundings? Why, to take care that they die *secundum artem*.'

'And what's dying secundum hart him? Hart him is hart him, death's death, I've a notion; and as to the doctors—damme but I'd start 'em, if they let death get the start of a jolly ship's company.'

'Come, Master Stowthehold, stow away your clapper in the silent corner of your mouth, if there is one, and if you can't let anything reasonable out of it, listen to reason. Draughts and pills are of no use to the skipper in any degree; but half-a-dozen degrees of north latitude would set him up again. He is pining for his home and for his children. Now, master, you keep the course of the vessel. Can't you get into a little cooler latitude?

'Yes, doctor, cold enough, and get broken by a court-martial. Cold comfort that for me.'

There being nothing to be gained by good counsel aft, the surgeon, next day, tried his luck forward. During the night it had fallen calm, and now, at noon-day, there was no air stirring saving that which came in cat's-paws from all quarters of the compass. All this was very acceptable to Mr. Mizen, whilst the captain lay panting upon his couch, nearly suffocated for want of atmospheric nourishment. Brown was standing over him with a rude fan, made of canvass, exciting an artificial breeze, and at intervals sprinkling his loose dress with ether. After two or three convulsive efforts at respiration, a light froth appeared upon his lips, and closing his languid eyes he fell into a deep sleep; so gentle and so deep, that his young nurse fancied he was dead, and was going to give way to a loud outburst of grief when Mortimer led him away.

As they passed from under the poop-awning to the quarter-deck, they were met by the envious first-lieutenant.

'How is your patient to-day, doctor?' said he.

'All but dead,' was the grave reply. 'He sleeps now, and must, on no account, be disturbed. No one must walk over his head.'

The surgeon and his young companion passed on to the sick bay.

'Walk over his head!' said the lieutenant to his sycophant. 'He and many more like him have walked over mine. But every dog will have his day, and I'll have mine yet.'

'I hope so,' said the lieutenant of marines. 'I suppose he can't last twenty-four hours.'

'I calculate that he'll die about eleven to-morrow forenoon. Tremendously hot it will be then. I've generally noticed, that if a fellow is going to slip his wind, and he gets over eleven, he will hang on till about midnight. I don't know what it may be ashore, but that's the way afloat. I should like to know what philosophy says to that.'

'Of course you'll be acting captain.'

'On course. And, Mr. Sniffle, won't I make a shindy? I shall have Mr. Chivers under arrest in no time, that's settled. Then that soft-faced sneaker whom the captain so much pets—I hope you don't think that I bear him any malice? not I. Couldn't demean myself to that. But I'll make him do his duty—I'll make him go to the maintopgallant cross-trees if I haul him up every rattlin by tenter-hooks. That's settled. I shall be in no hurry to make port, depend on't. I think that I'll creep to leeward of Guadaloupe, and if I could pick up with a French frigate, or even a good fat French West Indiaman, my fortune's made. I'm so glad that it's so precious hot, and so precious calm.'

'Shall we call you captain, when the skipper's dead?'

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'I should think so,' said Mr. Mizen, hitching up the slack of his trousers.

Now, our quartermaster, Christopher Crosstrees, who was at the helm, heard all this improving conversation, and knowing himself to be no particular favourite of the expectant captain, he did not altogether feel very cheerful at his own prospects. He knew very well, with the rest of the ship's company, that the coward boy was a bone of contention between the captain and his lieutenant, and therefore he had taken the more notice of the lad. It must not be understood that he had shown him, till this time, either favour or attention. As a thorough seaman he had despised his timidity; but now his mind dwelt on the boy's sweet and innocent looks, and his heart insensibly became drawn towards him.

'It is not everybody who is born with my advantages,' said Cris Cross. 'We are not all gifted by Heaven to make good sailors. What o' that? I am not a-going to be proud, and yet, I'm as good a seaman as ferret-eyed Mizen any day, notwithstanding his white lappels; and only see how he comes over the poor lad. I know a trick or two; and we'll get to windward of him yet. Step my grog! Ah! does he think old Cris Cross will ever forget that?'

When Cris Cross was relieved at eight bells, instead of going down to his mess he sauntered about the canvas door of the sick bay, in the hope—no, no, in the certainty that Mr. Mortimer would call him in for a gossip, for the surgeon loved the quaint humour of the stanch old boy.

We may easily suppose the turn that the conversation took when Crosstrees was seated on the medicine chest, and had duly despatched his first glass of grog. Young Brown listened to every word most attentively.

'Well, sir,' said the quartermaster, 'so I understand that you think Captain Dignum would be able to get the weathergage of that rum old customer, Death, if you could get him home.'

'His only chance, Cris Cross.'

'And he won't bout ship upon his own 'sponsibility?'

'He prefers his duty to his life, and all that makes life sweet.'

'Well, well,' said Crosstrees scratching his head violently. 'You laugh at my rubbing up my old grey poll, but bad company gives us bad habits. Since I have cut my great relations, I have fallen sadly into low forecastle ways.'

'So I have heard; you shall tell me that tale one of these days.'

'I was going to say, sir—I beg your pardon, but I'd see you d—d first. Now, if I had said so, I should have deserved the character that I've most unjustly got, of being an insolent drunken swab. But that's neither here nor there. Now, you did right, sir, to come to the old sailor for advice. There are three ways of getting the skipper home, but the first won't do, and the second is not practicable; whilst the last is as easy and quite as pleasant as getting mops and brooms. Now this is the first way.'

'Let the first go its ways, and the second may go the same way as the first. Zounds, man! what use is there in telling us ways that won't do?'

'Beg your pardon, doctor, but I would not interrupt you till you have payed away all your cable. But you should listen to all ways in a difficulty for the sake of edification; for if an expedient won't do this time, it may next; and a chap with a lot of expedients in his knowledge-box is like a man with a bag full of money in his hand. He'll go a great way, sir, I do assure you, sir.'

'I am very patient, Cris Cross; it is a part of my profession. So tell me your two plans that are to no purpose first, if you will but disclose the practicable method at last.'

'The first way would be to get the master and the captain of the hold to start almost all the water, and let them make an affidavit that the rats and other vermin have eaten holes in the casks. I have seen that expedient answer, but it wouldn't do now, cause why, 'cause you'd have to run for the nearest port, and that I take to be just where you don't want to be going.'

'Very logically put.'

'Do not talk to me of logic, sir; it puts me in mind of bygone and better days. May my grog be abundantly watered, if I have not forgotten how to state a plain syllogism.'

'I could—' said young Brown, his eyes brightening, and speaking for the first time.

'You could do what, younker?' said the quartermaster, turning sharply upon him.

'Nothing; I can do nothing. I cannot even go aloft.'

'Now, the second method, a good one enough, would be, to get some one to go into the captain's cabin, steal all his despatches, and fling them overboard. Everybody knows where the box that contains them is always kept, and there is lead enough in it to make it sink. Bless you, box and all would find the bottom as soon as the deep-sea-lead.'

The surgeon made a little crook with the forefinger of his right hand, which he placed under his right ear, and seemed to be stretching his neck in a very odd way, whilst old Cris Cross thrust out his two legs to their utmost extent, and set them quivering violently. So that scheme was disposed of.

'And yet it answered admirably once,' said the old man, after an intelligent pause, which was occupied by him in looking very wistfully into his empty glass. The surgeon took the hint, but gave nothing in return. He was too much his friend.

'You shall tell me that story some day, when we stand in no awe of the master-at-arms. Now for the practicable plan?'

'Well, this meek-eyed lad could set that going—if, if he could but go aloft.'

'And would it save his life?' said Brown, his eyes glistening with hope and with fear.

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'Mr. Mortimer tells you so. Let some smart active young fellow whom you can trust to, shindy up to the main truck, and from thence descry a three-masted vessel a point abaft the starboard beam. Let him give cry. "What does she look like?" sings out old Ferret-eyes. "Looms large, sir," says the boy; "but I can only see her three top-gallant sails out of the water." "Watch and idlers, trim sails," says Mizen; "haul on board the starboard tacks," and away you go due north.'

'Very good indeed, Cris Cross. But how are we always to keep this vessel that looms large in sight?'

'Pooh, pooh! don't you all want to go out of the due course, and get north! Mizen wants it, to get the command longer in his hands. Don't the second, third, and fourth lieutenants, the three officers of the three watches, want to get north, because they are in your secret, and wish to save the captain's life? Don't every man on board want to get north, for it's so devilish hot here that even the cockroaches sweat, and the scorpions are fanning themselves with their tales. Only set it agoing.'

'That's easy enough. But won't somebody find out that the strange sail cannot be seen, merely for the simple reason, because it's not in sight?'

'Begging your pardon, sir, for a learned man, your own sight is not very clear. The man who can't see this strange sail, can't see far enough, that's all; but he must not give the lie to those who can. May the Lord love you, I once sailed in a sloop of war that was in chase of the same strange sail for fifteen days, and which nobody could see but one man, and that was the skipper's pet; and the chase terminated exactly under a point of land at Antigua, on which was the estate of a gentleman with whose daughter our captain was all over besmitten. These coincidences will happen. Didn't he go ashore and junket it for a week, whilst we lay at single anchor shifting topmasts, that we were afraid might have been sprung, and setting up the standing rigging, which had been strained in the long chase.'

'Cross, my boy, I see it all now. I am sure there must be a large warlike-looking three-masted vessel on the starboard beam at this very instant.'

'To be sure there is, somewhere between this and the north pole. You know guns, that is Irish ones, may be made to shoot round a corner, and some eyes may be so constructed as to see round the convexity of the globe, that is, if they are well prepared by a good glass of grog.'

'Well, there's the grog; now, you find the eyes. Honour! Not a drop of this for your own cheek yet.' So the case-bottle was confided to the quartermaster's keeping.

Then was John Brown afflicted to his very heart. He understood it all, and said to himself, 'All this would I do for love. Let me make one more effort; and, perhaps, in spite of my sickness and giddiness, I may do what other lads appear to do so easily and cheerfully. I will go aloft.'

We are very sorry, for the sake of the dramatic interest of our story, that we cannot say that a miracle was performed in Brown's favour, like that which happened to the dumb son of Codrus, who spoke for the first time when he saw his father's life threatened. Captain Dignum owed nothing to the exertions of his protégé. When the first lieutenant went below, the poor boy did attempt to crawl up the mizen rigging; it almost cost him his life. He had not ascended many feet, before his head began to swim, and losing all command over his limbs he fell, and would have rolled overboard, had he not been caught by Crosstrees.

The old sailor fully understood and appreciated the gallant failure. From that moment he loved the lad. 'Never mind, Jack,' said he, when Brown had a little recovered himself; 'it would be just as cruel of a bird to expect me to fly, as of your shipmates to expect you to go aloft. It is not in your nature, that's all. Don't you try again. You are none the worse because you can't. I say so. There, go into the cabin, and keep the skipper alive.'

In the meantime Mr. Mortimer had prepared the ward-room officers, and, about two o'clock P. M., two of the smartest foretopmen were seen playing at 'follow my leader' about the rigging; it being nearly calm, and the ship rolling considerably. At length one of them was seen leaning with his breast fairly upon the truck at the main-royal head.

'A strange sail one point abaft the starboard beam!' &c. &c. &c.

Everything took place as old Crosstrees had predicted, even to the minutest circumstance, and, with the puffs of air that they had, the ship's head was brought due north. The surgeon gave it as his decided opinion that the captain was too ill to be disturbed, and Mr. Mizen was very joyful.

Those not in the secret, the principal of whom was the first lieutenant, speculated upon what the strange sail could be; those that were, thought it an excellent joke, and enjoyed it extremely. At sunset a breeze sprang up, and away went the ship to the north, at a most satisfactory rate to those interested.

Next morning, at daylight, Mr. Mizen himself was up at the maintopmast crosstrees with his glass. Having grown stiff in the joints, he could get no higher. He could see nothing; but the same foretopman who saw the vessel the day before, again ascended to the truck, and asserted that he saw the chase quite as plain then as he had done yesterday. This was strictly true. Others followed him. Some saw it as well as he; others were not quite certain, but they were sure that they saw something. Mr. Mizen was satisfied, and went below to trim sails, and think how he could increase the canvass under which the ship was now pressed.

There was now a little variation in the reports of the seers of the strange sail; yet

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they all coincided that it was standing on the same course as the Polyphemus, so the pursuit would be a long one.

'The longer the better,' said the first lieutenant. 'Mind your helm, quarter-master?'

'Very well thus—very well thus,' said Crosstrees, with a broad grin.

Whilst the ship was dancing merrily on, with the wind abeam, Captain Dignum lay in a very precarious, and almost unconscious state. It grew perceptibly cooler, however, and on the third day of the pursuit he was wonderfully relieved by an effusion of blood from the lungs. From that moment he improved hourly, and yet his expectant successor thought every hour would be his last.

On the fifth day of the chase, and when many fancied that they must be pursuing the flying Dutchman, Mr. Mortimer reported to the first lieutenant a great improvement in the captain's health.

'Excessively rejoiced at it,' said Mizen, pulling a very long face, and at the slack of his trousers at the same time. 'Most singular. How do you account for it, doctor?'

'In two ways,' said the malicious medical. 'In the first, by good nursing. That boy Brown has, with the change of the temperature, by getting so far north, completely saved the captain's life. It has turned out just as I supposed. He was never afflicted with the true tubercular consumption. A crisis has taken place, and if we can but keep in this cooling refreshing breeze he is safe, and bids fair to live as long as either you or I.'

'You don't say so!' exclaimed the first luff, looking quite aghast.

'O, I do indeed! We are going merrily through the water. When shall we get a view of this chase from the deck? I long to see what she's like.'

'May she be steered into hell by the devil, with brimstone blazes right aft. I believe it's all a humbug. Some mere cloud, that the fools of look-outs have mistaken for a ship. I'll up helm directly.'

'O no,' said Mr. Mortimer, 'you must not do that, because I have a message for you from the captain, who desires to see you on this particular subject.'

'Is he well enough for that? And pray sir,' he continued sharply, 'why didn't you tell me this before?'

'I reserved the best news for you to the last.'

'The service is going to the dogs,' he growled, and went into the cabin.

There another mortification awaited him. He found Captain Dignum wonderfully better, and his voice quite strong enough to give him a sharp reprimand for having run the ship so far out of her course. Mizen, to justify himself, made out the necessity to have been much greater than it really was, and was thus compelled to play the game against himself.

'Then,' said the captain, 'since we have gone so far, we had better see the end of it. I find the ship's head is due north. I am not sorry for that. Clap on more sail if you can, and make an end of the matter at once.'

The first-lieutenant was now entangled into doing the very thing that he most disliked, and to be reprimanded for it.

'There is some comfort left, however. We must go to Jamaica after all; and then you know, Mr. ——'

As he was thus addressing his sycophant, the man at the maintopmast head hailed that he saw the chase quite plainly now, and that we were coming up with her hand over hand. This announcement caused a great sensation to those in the secret, and to those not. Mizen again went aloft, and this time he might have been gratified if he would, for there was apparently a man-of-war quite as eager to meet them as they to come up with her.

This news brought the invalid captain on deck for the first time for many days. The ships neared each other rapidly. Private signals, and then their numbers, were exchanged, and the stranger turned out to be the Linnet sloop-of-war, going home with despatches, after having served three years on the station.

Crosstrees' plan had succeeded. The vessels hove to. The commander of the Linnet had no wish to go home and be put upon half-pay, and an exchange was soon effected, Captain Dignum giving his acting order to the commander to act as post-captain of the Polyphemus, and appointing the first lieutenant of the Linnet to the command of that sloop-of-war. After which, all the principal officers of both vessels held a survey on the body of Captain Dignum, and he was invalided, of course, to the illimitable rage and utter mortification of Lieut. Mizen, who found himself much worse off than before, and under the command of a stranger, and of a man much his junior not only in years but in the service.

All these transactions took place on board the larger vessel. When they were all arranged, and just as Dignum was about to step over the side to take his passage on board the Linnet for England, he took timid John Brown by the hand, and advancing towards Mizen, with the tears in his eyes and a pathos the most touching, he recommended the lad to his protection, concluding thus: 'I feel that he has saved my life. The blessing of my children and of the mother of my children, will be upon him for ever. Directly that I arrive in England I will procure his discharge from the Admiralty. I have left sufficient money with Mr. Mortimer to supply all his little wants. I have also written about him to the admiral on the station. He may be induced to send him home at once. Remember that I owe my life to him.'

'The white-livered milk sop, the fawning canting scoundrel!'—were the words that passed through Mizen's mind. 'Ay, ay, sir—we'll have an eye to the youngster,' were

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those that passed through his mouth. Captain Dignum also recommended young Brown strongly to the new skipper, and then took his leave of the ship's company and his officers, regretted by nearly every one on board.

The Polyphemus proceeded towards Barbadoes, her acting captain full of hopes of being confirmed, and her first-lieutenant by no means improved in temper by his disappointment, and with no increase of good-will towards the boy, to whom he unhesitatingly attributed it. He had his first word with the new captain, and gave him such an overcharged account of Brown's pusillanimity, that the boy was delivered up to his tender mercies in order to be made a seaman of.

The sequel of Brown's fate was rapid, the crisis terrible. Two days saw him withdrawn from the attendance upon the benevolent surgeon and the sick. On the third day he was well flogged because he would not, or could not, go aloft, and on the fourth he was deprived of his intellects.

The new skipper was a bit of a tartar. He interfered with everything, and Mizen no longer found himself captain over his captain, as in the days of the easy and sick Dignum. He found himself very often reprimanded, commended never. So he drank his grog strong upon this, and one afternoon, just as the captain had gone to dinner, he came on the quarter-deck fully determined to get some relief from his mental and vicious irritation by a little persecution. Full of this amiable expedient, he sent for his victim, Brown, and a boatswain's mate with his colt. Colts were not then exploded from the navy. The uninitiated must know that they were pieces of rope of about a foot long, pointed at the ends, and nearly as thick as the thong of a whip, and capable, in a strong hand, of inflicting very severe punishment.

'Up the rigging, dastard!' was the harsh, and, to poor Brown, the impossible command. He attempted it, however, and crawled up a few rattlins. As usual, he grew pale, a tremor seized all his limbs, and his head began to swim, and he paused.

'Up higher!'

'I ca-a-ant,' was the shivering reply.

'Bo'sun's-mate, freshen his way, and be d——d to you. Start him along.'

And then the lash resounded upon the boy's tortured body, and the spectators were divided in their feelings at the unmanly exhibition. Some few thought no punishment too dreadful for a coward; some pitied him, and many thought he ought to jump overboard. Though the general sentiment was not with the sufferer, it was decidedly against the inflictor. In the midst of this revolting scene Mr. Mortimer made his appearance, and then Brown, somewhat encouraged by his presence, dared to remonstrate, but in the humblest tones of which the human voice is susceptible.

'O, Mr. Mizen! dear, dear, dear Mr. Mizen!' he moaned plaintively.

'I'll dear you, you confounded dastard! How dare you dear me, you blackguard? Lay it in to him, bo'sun's-mate—dear me!'

'Remember what you promised Captain Dignum,' shrieked the boy, as he writhed under a fresh storm of blows.

This last appeal so exasperated the lieutenant that he sprang upon the Jacob's ladder, and thus getting within reach of Brown, struck him with his clenched fist, a violent blow on the side of the head. The lad, probably stunned, let go his hold, and fell, first striking his skull against the iron rim of the mizen chains, and then plunged into the sea. He floated very buoyantly on the gently-agitated surface of the water; the ship was hove to, the cutter lowered, and his body recovered, but his mind was totally gone.

He was soon brought to so much consciousness as his intellects would admit. He recovered his health, but he was a fitful idiot. Mr. Mizen had effectually cured him of his cowardice. He was now as active in the rigging as the untamed monkey. The utmost heights of the slender masts were now his place of refuge. Often in the middle watch might he be seen as if he floated in the air between the main and foremasts, gibbering his impassioned nonsense to the moon, for the slender stay on which he had supported himself was scarcely visible. Among other phenomena attendant upon his fall, he lost his faculty of speech, and made a noise when over-excited which very much resembled the sounds of 'Nicketty Nock,' and in a very short time his shipmates had ceased to know him by any other name.

The surgeon, Mr. Mortimer, thought that he might be recovered by the means of a delicate operation, which should elevate one part of his skull and remove another, but he did not feel confidence sufficient to attempt it.

Then began the truly fatherly care of old Crosstrees. He alone knew how to manage him, and to render him serviceable. All things merely manual he learned easily, and was prompt in his obedience to any command that he understood, and he soon understood most of those nautical. He grew thin and very sinewy, but still retained his beauty of countenance, though it was a little marred by a look of trusting silliness, alternated with a gaze of intense anxiety.

For many reasons it was thought better not to invalid him. No smarter lad was there in the navy at furling a royal, sending down a skysail, or clearing a pennant. He became so attached to Crosstrees that it would have been the height of cruelty to have separated them, and altogether he was a much happier boy without the healthy use of his senses than he had been with them.

Mr. Mizen took great credit to himself for this reformation. For his part, he could not see what use a mere seaman could make of too much reason, and if half the ship's company were as dumb and as active as Nicketty Nock, it would have been all the better for the ship.

However, either Captain Dignum died, or

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John Brown, his amiable boy-nurse, had been forgotten, for Nicketty Nock's discharge did not arrive, and he, together with his guardian Crosstrees, had been draughted in the interval of three years into three different vessels, and they remained together so long as they both belonged to the service.

THE TANKA GIRL.

'The Tanka, or egg-boat girls of China, are many of them extremely well-looking and engaging: their duties at Macao are similar to those of a Thames waterman in London; while, setting duty aside, their conversation and merry laughing faces give them the advantage over, perhaps, any water rivals in the *fare* department."

Tell me, little Tanka girl,
Art thou ever smiling?
Hast never felt care's cruel dart,
Or lives there that within thy heart,
All sorrow reconciling?
If thy lot be such, I vow,
You and I are strangers now.

Pretty, laughing Tanka girl,
Hear a Fanqui's ditty;
If thou hast won grief's antidote,
Suffer me step within thy boat,
To share the prize—in pity.
Scarce could fulminating Lin
Deem such friendliness a sin.

What avails the Fo-yeu's ire,
The Hoppo's* execrations?
While you and I, with merry chat,
Discuss the charms of this or that,
Without the law of nations!
Pillars of the state are they:
We will keep all state away.

Pouting, little Tanka girl,
Jealous, too, already!
Of what, of whom? yon green coquette,†
Whose prison'd legs 'ne'er served her yet,'
To keep their owner steady?
Hence from me the maiden, whose
Charms are in her baby shoes!

Tsing-à;‡ well, a brief *tsing-à*:
Wherefore part in sorrow?
False may the Lins a Fanqui call—
I'll prove 'tis not the case with all,
By calling here, to-morrow.
Should the Hoppo grumble, we
Hush him with another fee.

F. J. G.

"*Bocca Tigris*,"
24th *December*, 1840.

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* 'Fo-yeu,' and 'Hoppo,' both government officers; the latter, we believe, chiefly a collector of customs, &c.

† The vulgar Chinese call a certain class of women with small feet 'green girl,' probably from the colour of their dress.

‡ *Tsing à*, a form of salutation, or 'good-bye.'

RECOLLECTIONS OF A STUDENT.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE WOOD-SPIRIT.'

THE POLISH HARP-GIRL.

'Wir schlingen unsre Händ' in einen Knoten,
Zum Himmel heben wir den Blick und schwören,
Ihr alle, die ihr lebet, sollet es hören
Und, wenn ihr wollt, so hört es auch ihr Todten!

'Wir schwören stehn zuwollen den geboten,
Des Land's, des Mark wir tragen in den Röhren,
Und diese Schwerter, die wir hier empören,
Nicht eh'r zu sen'ken, als vom Feind zerschroten.'

Fahnenschwur. Fr. Ruckert.

At the break of early dawn we issued forth from our concealment, and in detached parties advanced along the road to Warsaw. We felt altered since yesterday, the blood seemed to flow with a prouder current through our veins, our hearts to beat with a freer throb, for we had crossed swords with the oppressor—we trod as freemen in the land of heroes. As we advanced the towers of Warsaw arose one by one before us in the far distance—the towers of that famed capital, on whose spires centuries of glory seem concentrated. We halted—we listened for a sound—the mighty heart lay silent before us—we almost expected to hear the roar of artillery—the deep descant of thousand-fold shouts; but the country around us was still, and the November sun gleamed coldly and cheerlessly along the voiceless plains. Still we advanced, and I may not describe our feelings as the full import of the approaching event impressed itself on our thoughts, as we seemed to hear with prophetic power the deep outburst of the life and death battle which would soon rage far and wide along those silent scenes. Still we advanced, the red sun rolled away, and the bleak shadows of evening rushed down around us. The distant bell of a church came knell-like across the country, and told how near the mighty hour was approaching.

The barrier of Mockotow rose gloomily before us, but we gained admission and passed. During the whole of our march Count Theodore had kept by my side; a sudden friendship had arisen between us—a sudden, for true friendship, like true love, is of sudden birth—soul understands soul, and baffles the dictates of experience. The streets were silent, dark, and deserted, except by the never-absent patrol, but here and there the sound of loud voices came from the houses, and from one we heard a national air of Poland. At length the notes of music came floating down a street, and as we turned the corner a full blaze of light fell around us. It proceeded from the mansion beneath which we stood. The shadows of the dancers within were thrown against the casement; we could see the gleaming girandoles, and distinguish the merry measure of the minstrelsy.

'A Russian tyrant, revelling amid the spoils of Poland,' I exclaimed.

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'Not so,' whispered one of my companions; 'those are all true hearts within. They are conspirators who have gone to enjoy one hour of gaiety, before they perish in the battle for their country. Let us enter—you will there find the noblest of my countrymen.'

We ascended—we were admitted—thanks to the well-known name of him who led the way. Our entrance seemed to diffuse additional pleasure amid the revellers, for our travel-soiled garments told of our lengthened wandering, and the conspirators saw heralded, with joy, that a kindred spirit dwelt in the remote confines of the country.

And true was it, the noblest and the fairest of Poland were there—assembled, it might be, for the last time, ere they laid cold upon the field of murder, or mouldering in the dungeon's vault. And eagerly they snatched the fleeting joy, even as the drowning mariner fixes his sinking gaze for the last time on the sweet blue of heaven. That was a strange ball, a memorable night, and many a guest, now vowed a soldier of liberty, left the darkening hall with an unutterable pang.

The evening of Monday, the 29th of November, came at length. The city was perhaps even more tranquil than it had been lately, and no one might dream of the mighty outburst that was at hand. The simultaneous rising was to take place at six o'clock; the attack on the palace was entrusted to eighteen young men, mostly students, among whom I contrived to be one; the signal was to be the firing of an old brewery in Solec, at the southern end of Warsaw, and in the immediate vicinity of the Belvidere. The evening closed in dark and cold, with a cheerless November blast. The streets were silent as death, but I knew what direful preparation was making amid that silence. In conformity with the directions I had received, I was arming, and about to issue forth in order to join my companions, when looking in the direction of Solec, I beheld a red light in the sky; it was evidently the old ruin on fire—but it wanted still half an hour to the appointed time. We knew not how to act—to make the attack now would be rash, and we therefore decided upon assembling by the bridge of Sobieski, in the park of Lazienki which extends from the palace to the barracks of the Russian cavalry.

Impenetrable darkness shrouded every object, and we waited in the silent park for some sound or signal. But none came; the last red hues of the conflagration were fading from the sky, and we waited in cheerless suspense. Presently we heard a commotion in the distance; for we could see nothing amid the gloom, until we discovered lights advancing across the park in all directions. The cavalry and the police had taken the alarm, our presence had been revealed to them, and they were seeking for us everywhere. We stood motionless, hiding our weapons as best we might, lest the lights should glance upon them and reveal us. The darkness saved Poland on that night; several of the patroles passed within a few yards, but they discovered us not. After a time the alarm passed, and we were left to solitude again.

Thus an hour elapsed, in which we waited for a fresh signal, and waited in vain. Every spirit sank, every heart beat faint—death would have been preferable to that dreadful suspense. At last the signal was renewed; the delay had been occasioned by the absence of Wysocki, the gallant superintendent of the school of ensigns, who dwelt in barracks not far from the Belvidere. When he appeared among us, fresh courage animated all. He addressed us in a few stirring words, and then hurried on to place himself at the head of the ensigns.

Our leader, Louis Nabielak, now divided us into two equal bands, and instantly led us on to the attack of the palace. One party was destined to guard the rear, whilst himself, at the head of the other (to which I belonged) rushed into the court, shouting. 'Death to the tyrant!' As we burst through the outer gate, the report of firing rang in the neighbouring barracks. Animated by the sound, and by our own wild cry, we rushed up the marble steps. No one opposed us; around us was deep silence, save the fall of flying footsteps in the distant galleries. Door after door fell shattered beneath our blows, but the rooms beyond were deserted.

At length we found the president, Lubovidzki, crouching for concealment—a few strokes from our swords stretched him lifeless on the floor—but Constantine had fled; surrounded by women, and guarded by prayer, he knelt in the pavilion of the princess Lowicka. Thus we rushed like a storm through that long-dreaded prison-palace, and were retreating, when we met the Russian general, Gendre, whom even his own master, the grand duke Constantine, had named the basest of the base. He fell dead at our feet, and, rejoining our comrades without, Nabielak led us to the bridge of Sobieski. Here we found the ensigns; and fortunate was our union, for a part of the Russian cavalry was hastening to the Belvidere.

'Poles!' cried Wysocki to the assembled ensigns, 'the hour of vengeance is come—to-night we must conquer or die!'

'To arms! to arms!' rose their responsive shout, as in a body they marched upon the barracks, firing their muskets as a signal to their friends in the city. The next instant a deep volley rang along the park—the Russian cavalry were mounting in haste, but fifty fell, never to rise again: the rest fled, when Wysocki drew off his ensigns to the bridge of Sobieski, in order there to await the arrival of six companies of Polish grenadiers, who were simultaneously to march to his aid.

But the delay had given the enemy time to rally, and, indignant at being beaten by a handful of youths, they came down from all sides. Soon the clashing line of cuirassiers was heard closing in upon our rear, intercept-

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ing our retreat to the city. In a moment Wysocki led us on, and, charging with the bayonet, those proud troops were driven back in confusion, and dispersed by this desperate onset of the ensigns. Scarcely was this danger conquered, when in simultaneous attack, two Russian regiments of cavalry came down to destroy us. Our powerful fire, and a charge with the bayonet, sufficed to drive them back, and they fled—the brilliant cavalry of Russia—before the devoted bravery of these young warriors;—but they were Poles, and they knew that on them depended the fate of the movement of that night, for as yet none had joined the rising, and the mighty event at present hung in doubtful balance. They pressed forward in desperate struggle till they reached the Radzivill barracks. Here Wysocki kept the three Russian regiments engaged, to prevent them from crushing the insurrection in the city. A furious contest ensued in the darkness of night, and in the intervals of the clamour we listened for some sound of movement from Warsaw—but in vain; it lay silent and dark;—no note of approaching thousands—no cheering shout—no measured tread as of Polish troops advancing to our aid.

'Hold out, my brave comrades!' cried our leader, 'they must hear the firing, if they saw not the signal, and all Warsaw will soon be stirring!'

But at that moment a fearful cry from a part of his troop arose for help, and, as a last alternative, he headed a desperate charge. Again each of the Russian regiments was attacked in turn, and eventually dispersed by our bayonets. The road was now open to the city; the enemy did not pursue us, believing our force much greater than it was, and unimpeded we marched through the New World Street, leading us into the heart of the capital.

A fearful silence met us at every step—not a footfall on the pavement, not a light in the houses. Darkness hung like a curtain before us, concealing our onward path, and with anxious hearts we passed on through its impalpable folds. Our spirits sank within us;—it was impossible to deny the fact, we were alone in arms against the man who reigns from Kamschatka to the Vistula.

With foreboding ear we heard the cannon rolling on, and the Cossacks drawing near from the heart of that vast empire. Every step we took was a challenge to their approach, and yet we were alone! 'To arms! to arms!' we shouted again and again;—the long sepulchral echo answered, but not a patriot appeared, not a door opened in the long line of silent houses! We halted; we listened for the report of cannon from the Radzivill barracks, which were to have been fired as alarm guns, but there came no shot booming a welcome to our isolated band. To the westward we could distinctly hear the assembling of troops, and by their silence we knew they must be Russian detachments. Despair now began to weigh down our hopes. At this moment a solitary individual crossed our path—it was General Stanislaus Potocki. We had always considered him a firm patriot, and we now besought him to place himself at our head, and lead us on; but he refused, and we permitted him to pass, little aware that the troops we heard defiling in the distance were six companies of Russian infantry sent by him to the defence of the grand duke. We missed them but by a few streets;—had we met, it is more than probable we should have been overpowered, and the rising of the city prevented. Shortly after we met General Trembicki, the commander of the ensigns, hastening with important tidings to the palace. To him we made the same offer as to Potocki; but he reprimanded us as traitors, and advised us to throw ourselves on the mercy of the grand duke. He too wanted to pass on, but we detained him, and forced him to accompany us. Soon after we met three more Polish generals, hurrying to the Belvidere, to lead the Russian troops to the massacre of the patriots—they were known enemies to their country, and we moved on over their lifeless bodies. 'General,' we exclaimed, 'you have beheld the fate of traitors! Once more we ask you to join the nation.' Still he refused, and dauntlessly accused us of rebellion and murder. There was something noble in his bold bearing, and we bore him along with us down the Bielanska Street. In vain; he still resisted, and he fell a victim to his unbending fidelity to Constantine, and his treachery to the fatherland.

Soon after this, a deep sound was heard in the heart of the city, as of gathering multitudes, and by the faint gleam of the flickering lamps we beheld detachments of Polish troops marching in all directions. We breathed freer;—we knew by their appearance that the patriots at the northern end of Warsaw had succeeded in rising before the enemy had come down upon them. They immediately took possession of Praga and the two bridges over the Vistula, while other troops were hastening to the arsenal, situated in the midst of the city.

We were greatly surprised that the numerous Russian forces had as yet remained quiet, for, save our desperate encounter with the three cavalry regiments, not a shot had been fired. It seemed as though a divine Providence had withheld and paralyzed the enemy, while, on the other hand, the insurrection was taking a strange, silent course, utterly at variance with the preconcerted plans of the conspirators. The people had not risen, the Russians were under arms before, the Polish troops, they were informed of the rising, and yet Warsaw remained silent, yet we had marched unmolested through its deserted streets. Thus wavering and slow were the measures of a cowardly tyrant.

But now, in the last hour, the conspirators suddenly awoke from their supineness, which had been equally unaccountable as the dilatory movements of the Russian. They had

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succeeded in collecting crowds in the old town, the hotbed of former insurrections, when suddenly a deep dull roar broke upon the heavy hush of the night—red flashes mounted against the dun clouds that hung volumed in the air, and a distant clash beneath the walls of the arsenal told that the battle of liberty had commenced.

Steadily the Russian column advanced upon the arsenal, but a line of fire blazed in an instant before it, and, charging at the point of the bayonet, the Polish troops drove the enemy before them.

The liberty of Poland was now at issue, but it was now in open fight; conspiracy had changed to war, and we feared not the event. Before, a thousand trifling circumstances might have crushed the incipient and wavering revolution; now it could be silenced but by the roar of cannon and the flash of steel. But the Russians were at present far superior in numbers to the Polish troops, and it was deemed expedient to arm the people, to whom thirty thousand muskets taken from the arsenal were accordingly distributed. Ere an hour had elapsed, the city was in our power, the prisons broken open, and the long-suffering captives stood once more as freemen among their countrymen. Dreadful were the secrets those prisons disclosed; many of their victims died on being brought to the light; some placed themselves at the head of their friends, and led them on like spectres risen from the grave. The armed multitudes now spread about the city, and where before was sepulchral silence, were heard the joy-shouts of a nation, awakened from its long slumber of slavery, while amid the din arose the report of the volleys of musketry, and the deep groan-like sounds of the artillery, as along the whole line taken up by the patriots the sharp conflict was unremittingly continued, particularly in the square of Saxony, where the Polish regiment of horse chasseurs still sided with the enemy.

Strange as it may seem, all this time the insurrection had no head. Every one acted and kept together from impulse, and as yet the utmost unanimity prevailed in an army without a general, a multitude without a leader; what say I—without a leader! the spirit of Poland soared above its capital on that night.

General Chlopicki was by all considered as the head of the insurrection, but he was nowhere to be found. At the first outburst he had concealed himself. In him alone the army reposed its confidence, him alone it would obey. In every horseman that dashed past the Polish troops on that eventful night, the patriots thought they beheld the veteran soldier, the friend of Napoleon, the hero of many fights—and loud acclamations greeted his supposed arrival; but he came not, and the cheers subsided into heart-oppressing silence, save when the occasional roar of musketry came from the square of Saxony, like a deep-muttered denunciation of Russian vengeance in perspective, a deep omen of coming battles!—still the troops kept at their posts during the night, but when the first grey dawn stole over the spires of Warsaw, and afar were seen the Russian troops in order of battle, a misgiving seized all, a commotion was seen among the crowd, an irresolute walking to-and-fro. With every one morning is the hour of reflection, for sad and sober thought, and perhaps many might now feel the mighty import of the step they had taken, the dreadful power now arming against them for a war of extermination.

With the dawn, however, a thousand students of the University appeared before the lines of the insurgents, sons of the noblest houses; their appearance gave the sanction of time-hallowed names to the national impulse, and these gallant youths, headed by Lach Szyrma, their professor of moral philosophy, marching through the capital, destroyed the emblazonments of Russia, and, followed by vast multitudes, beat back its troops in the square of Saxony and avenue of Cracow. Ever and anon came a fierce encounter, and then the combat sank into silence, as though either side was exhausted.

After a deathlike pause the action was again renewed with considerable advantage on the side of the insurgents, and the Russian battalions began to fall back.

During all this period no revolutionary government had been organized; several patriot names had been associated with that already existing, and an order of the council summoning the insurgents to return to their duty, and adorned with these illustrious signatures, was circulated among the people. It might have destroyed all that had been done, but fortunately the multitude, looking only at the names affixed, read it not, and those few patriots who did, hastily destroyed it.

A grand pageant closed this first day of liberty, the procession of the council to the Bank, where Prince Lubecki thought it would be more out of the reach of popular clamour. The line of senators, and the thronging masses extended over a space of two miles, proceeding slowly on account of the great age of the venerable Niemcewicz, the bard of Poland. When the people saw their national poet thus advancing beneath the banner of liberty, the assembled thousands rent the air with acclamation,—'All must succeed since Niemcewicz is there!' and indeed all now seemed to prosper. The gallant general Sierawski joined the patriots in the evening, and was appointed military governor of Warsaw; in the night Chlopicki himself at last appeared.

That night, when triumphant joy sat throned in Warsaw, a stern and gloomy man might be seen resting beneath the trees before the barrier of Mockotow, and with him one long used to luxury, one young and fair, and in sooth a daughter of Poland; it was Constantine and his consort the Princess Lowicka. Around him gathered a dispirited soldiery and doubtful friends, while often the cheers from the capital might reach the ear of the fallen tyrant.

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I will not narrate the stormy scenes that were enacted in the council and the patriotic clubs; the noble but vain exhortations of the high-spirited Mochnacki, whose youth had been spent in prison, but whose unfettered mind roved from his dungeon walls, through time and space, till that hatred of tyranny grew within his heart, which made him burst armed into the council hall, and alone, at the risk of his life, accuse the wavering of treachery. Neither will I narrate how Chlopicki mistook the spirit of the insurrection; how, notwithstanding, he was the idol of the army and the students, who formed themselves into a guard of honour; how one by one the heroes of Poland arrived, and entered the ranks of her defenders; and how Constantine and the deputies from the council of administration met in a small house near the barrier of Mockotow, where the grand duke spoke of amnesty and showing indulgence to the guilty, and the deputy Ostrowski, pointing to his sword, said, 'There are none!' but will at once proceed to the last scene in the first part of this grand national drama.

On the following morning a commotion took place in Warsaw. A part of the Polish army still remained with Constantine, and the report was circulated that he forcibly detained it. As the rumour spread, countless crowds gathered in the avenue of Cracow; all pressed eagerly on to the Russian line, and Chlopicki with the troops was forced forward by the general impulse.

Zamoyski, an aide de-camp of the grand duke, had just left his presence, and was proceeding to Warsaw in order to negotiate between the fallen but still powerful despot and the insurgents, when he met these mighty masses. He was honoured by all as a true Pole, and it was perhaps owing to him that the revolution in its first commencement had been successful. His aim was to prevent bloodshed, and now, true to his plan, he conjured the eager thousands to pause, while he returned to the grand duke, promising to bring with him the permission of the latter for the Polish troops to join their brethren, or, in case of refusal, to lead them back in person.

'I give you half an hour, Colonel Zamoyski; longer than that I cannot restrain the ardour of the troops,' replied the general.

Zamoyski instantly hastened back to Constantine, and finally urged him to permit the Polish troops to rejoin their comrades.

'But what equivalent do they offer me as an inducement?' demanded the prince.

'None!' rejoined Zamoyski. 'But lose not a moment, or your flight will be intercepted. Every soldier, every citizen of Warsaw, is even now pouring down upon you. Hark! Hark!'

Loud came the dreadful clamour of the advancing multitudes down the avenue of Cracow. The tyrant turned pale; Zamoyski continued, 'Follow my advice, or it will be too late; the only time yet given you for flight is that which will be spent in the mutual greeting of the reunited soldiers.'

The Princess Lowicka, whose high courage formed a strong contrast with the pusillanimity of Constantine, exhorted him to remain firm. 'His honour forbids him to adopt such a measure,' she continued.

'But his safety, his very life renders it necessary,' rejoined the Pole. There was a pause, and at length Constantine broke silence.

'You may go,' he said; 'I permit the Polish troops to join their brigades.'

'Remember,' added the princess, 'the grand duke does not command nor authorize them to depart; he has only given them his permission.'

Her words awakened the fears of Constantine lest Zamoyski should exceed his directions, and he then wrote the following document:

'I permit the Polish troops, who have remained faithful to the last moment, to rejoin their countrymen. I am now about to lead the imperial troops away from the capital, and I expect from Polish loyalty that they will not be molested on their march to the empire. I likewise commend all national establishments and property, public as well as private, to the protection of the Polish nation, and place them under the safeguard of all that is most sacred.'

He then turned away with the words, 'Count Zamoyski, I have no more orders to give, and you have duties to fulfil. Adieu.'

Zamoyski then galloped off, exclaiming to the Russian officers, 'Farewell, gentlemen, till we meet again—perchance on the field of battle!'

In the mean time the Polish troops had joined their comrades in the avenue of Cracow, and a memorable scene took place. Shame sat on the brows of the returning warriors, as with downcast eyes they stood before the tumultuous thousands. But enthusiastic was the greeting of the people; they surrounded the silent chasseurs, and conducted them in triumph through the streets. Every soul in Warsaw, the old and young, the strong and the sick, came out to meet them; military music pealed in thunder on every side, banners waved from the houses, the bells rang a glad alarum from the old towers of Warsaw, till the graves of Poland's warriors, slumbering below, echoed to the mighty sound. This outburst of national feeling was like the thunder-storm that clears the long-burthened sky; while, even as the sunbeams smile through its majestic clouds, the fair daughters of Poland looked down from balcony and window on the stirring pageant moving through the streets below.

There was but one shadow to cast upon the scene, and it was but transient. Two generals, Vincent Krasinski and Kurnatowski, had dared to accompany the returning troops; they had headed the chasseurs in their attacks on the populace. Already had the procession reached the Bank, when

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they were recognized, and suddenly the cry, 'Death to the traitors!' was raised thousand-fold around them. They were torn from their horses; Chlopicki and Szembeck interposed, and at length placed them in safety; but they could not calm the indignation of the mob, that was preparing for an assault, when Lach Szyrma arrived with the academical guard of honour, entered the building, where the obnoxious generals had sought safety, and soon appeared with the two generals, the objects of the people's fury, on a balcony, accompanied by two standard-bearers with the national flags. They waved over the heads of those devoted men, and Lach Szyrma motioned the crowd to silence. The clamour ceased, and pointing with his sword to the banners of Poland, he dictated in a loud voice an oath of fidelity, which the captive generals repeated, swearing to serve as private soldiers in the ranks of the Polish army. This satisfied the generous spirit of the people, and the glad festivity of the scene was protracted undisturbed throughout the night. Bonfires blazed in the streets, and the names of those ancient heroes who fell, the holy martyrs of liberty, resounded in joyous shouts.

The fifth of December beheld the revolution established, by Chlopicki seizing the reins of power and becoming irresponsible dictator; while the provisional government had been self-instituted by Prince Zartoryski, the castellan Kochsnowski, General Pac, Niemcewicz (the bard), Lelewel, and the deputies Dombrowski and Ostrowski.

A general call to arms was addressed to the nation, all disbanded officers and troops called into active service, and proclamations issued to the palatine councils, summoning them to meet the diet on the eighteenth of December, and thus the last decisive step was taken, from which there could be no return.

Constantine was permitted to retire from Poland with the imperial troops unmolested—a great and generous, though an impolitic act. The fortresses of Zamosc and Modlin capitulated, and Poland for the time was free. * * * *

The assembly of the army and the people in the field of Mars was over; but the shouts of 'Long live the Dictator!' that greeted Chlopicki's assumption of power, and the thunder of applause that burst around, when that aged and stately warrior uncovered his head, and with enthusiastic devotion exclaimed 'Long live the Fatherland!' were still echoed from every side, as the tumultuous joy of the liberated nation rose in one deep choral to the throne of God!

For the first time, after a long interval, the national theatre was reopened; the banners of Lithuania and Poland waved over a countless audience, and a solemn hymn commenced by the performers, but in the chorus of which ('To arms, Poles!') all joined, opened the festivities of the evening. Then came a piece long banished by Russia from the stage, entitled 'The Cracovians and the Highlanders,' and the old forbidden songs, so dear to the heart of the Pole, the Polonaise of Kosciuszko, the March of Dombrowski, and the Mazourka of the Polish legions who fought in Italy. As its first tones were heard floating over the crowd, a sudden and simultaneous feeling seized every one present. All rushed forward and joined in the dance; the high and the low, the young and the old; distinctions were forgotten; the free are equal; and when the musicians ceased from exhaustion, the inspiriting melody was continued by thousands of voices, and the festival was prolonged till break of day.

Theodore was there, but he joined not in the dance; the smile came not to his pale lips, but the fire grew deeper and more intense in his eyes. He felt not less than those around him, but his thoughts were on the future and the past.

I was standing by him, when some one pressing with difficulty through the crowd drew me aside. 'You must come,' said the stranger; 'one awaits you without; there is no time to lose.'

I obeyed, and followed. We descended the crowded staircase, and as the glad sounds from within grew fainter, there was heard the loud and joyous acclaim of the multitude without, while the long lines of illumined houses, the bright bonfires, and the clamouring bells, told how Warsaw joyed for her liberty. But my attention was suddenly diverted to far other objects. A group stood close by the entrance-door, with difficulty maintaining their position, while, further on, a horseman was rushing with frantic speed, heedless of the mob around, that parted before the career of that fiery courser. 'Stop him! slay him!' cried a hundred voices; but every moment the fugitive sped farther, and soon this dark phantom-like figure was lost amid the crowd. Whether he had been struck down or had escaped at the time I knew not, and I heeded little, for amid the group beside me I beheld a sight that banished every other thought and feeling.

KARL.

SPENCER MIDDLETON; OR, THE SQUIRE OF RIVER HILL.

BY GEORGE STANLEY, ESQ.

CHAPTER I.

Riverley—Its inhabitants and neighbours.

Some fifteen miles on the high North Road lies the scene of our history, the half-town, half-village of Riverley, the second stage out from the metropolis. It is a curious place that same Riverley, a perfect specimen of a town in a state of transition from old-fashioned ways to new-fangled fashions; from old English feelings to nineteenth-century notions; from old gable-ended houses to

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white fronts, pilasters and plate-glass. The double principle was universally recognized in Riverley, whether or not from any latent Platonism, neo-Platonism, or any other 'ism,' I cannot now find time to decide; but there it was, and there it had been, and would be, for many, many long years. The river divided the town into the above bridge and below bridge, genteel expressions for the somebodies and the nobodies. As you pass over the bridge, which was itself double, to accommodate the duplicity of the stream, the till then narrow road diverged right and left, leading on the one hand under the Old Town Hall, and on the other under the New Town Hall, to the broad expanse of the market-place. They were a curious pair, that Old and New Town Hall, the former all gables, and ends, deep-set windows, and solid frames, carved beams and capacious chimney corners, latticed windows glittering with the arms of the Lords of Riverley. Tailed on to the old relic, now converted into a corn-dealer's warehouse, stood the New Hall. The basement was cold and white, and of that peculiar build which reminds one of plaster got the small-pox, but which builders call rustic; a square door, with square windows, supporting it on either side, and square wire blinds completed the useful and ornamental part of the basement; over this arose four round pilasters with gay capitals and square bases, and over head a lofty pediment internally graced with allegory, and externally with chimney-pots.

During the erection of this building, many were the opinions given as to what really was the order according to which the New Hall was being built. Some said it was doric, others composite, a third party that it was according to the order of the corporation. To have asked Mr. Inigo Wren Stubbs, the Riverley chief architect, would have only shown the ignorance of the inquirers, many of whom had formed the architectural committee, which had decided on his plan; his rival, Mr. Vambrugh Stoneanwood, always curled up his mouth with such a tight sneer when referred to, that no answer could be elicited. At last, one more bold than the rest strolled down to the embryo building, and after chatting with the head workman on things in general, and the hall in particular, tucked his hands under his coat-tail, and peering up most knowingly at the already rising pediment, put the all-important question.

'According to what order did you say the hall was, Simpson.'

'Woi, sar,' replied Simpson, 'I beloive it bee Muster Hindigo's Stubbs's horder, sur.'

And so it really was. But the glory of the hall was the allegory on the pediment, devised, designed and executed by a native Riverleyan, and only to be rightly understood by one of similar birth.

Immediately under the peak of the pediment stood a fat-faced good-natured female, over whose shoulders the tips of a pair of wings peered forth, descriptive of her unearthly character. Her dress was such as genii always wear; their fashions never alter, a clear proof of the unearthliness of the wearers, as no one but angels could go so lightly dressed in winter. Around her head floated three pair of wings, each pair bearing a very chubby head, such as on tombs are called cherubs, on pediments attendant geniuses. Thus did the genius of Riverley stand with outstretched hands, extending her influence and her patronage over two other demi-dressed females, the one of whom presented a corkscrew, the other a loaf, and were fabled to represent manufactures and commerce. Behind Commerce knelt one who bore an open book, and was called Religion, whilst high above Agriculture stood an Amazon with a drawn sword, who rejoiced in the name of State. Squeezed into the right-hand corner was a naked, wreath-crowned man, diligently washing his lower limbs from a water-jar which he bore beneath his left arm, whilst he extended the other towards the genius of Riverley, as if supplicating for some detergent mixture; he was held to be the river god; whilst the other unclothed gentleman, who occupied the further corner, and sat rather uncomfortably on a ploughshare, rejoiced in the title of God of the Land. However the old hall might bear up against its daily increasing neighbour, and strive to equal its dimensions, it was never known to make any further attempt after the allegorical group on the pediment was unveiled to the eyes of the wondering Riverleyans.

But to return to the market-place. The transition state was here shown by the gradually-retreating ends which even then stood forth from between the white fronts and stuccoed balustrades of their modernized neighbours. In this élite locality were two houses, the one an old red brick building, bearing on its front the name of the Crown, the other a gay glittering palace, all front and little back, with a great quantity of glass, and very little comfort. It was in former days, in the days of its quiet soberness and wooden front, the hostel of the Wheatsheaf, the weekly ordinary of the neighbouring farmers. It now called itself the Liberia Hotel and Posting-house, and misnamed the old one o'clock ordinary, a table d'hôte. One side of the market-place held little converse with the other, for one was Tory, the other Radical; one was the property of Spencer Middleton, the squire of River Hill, the oldest family in the county, the constant supporter of his king and his church. The other was on the land of the Honourable Russell Fitz-Russell de Mowbray, the Whig lord of the manor of Riverley.

On the Mowbray side lived the liberal attorney, the independent and unitarian ministers, who not being able to build two chapels, or support two distinct congregations, shared between them the same place of preaching, and divided between them the services and the income. There too lived the liberal library-keeper and bookseller

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who supplied the honourable lord of the manor with the 'Chronicle' and the 'Globe,' the dissenting ministers with the 'Watchman,' and lent out the 'Independent Whig' to the mixed multitude of Riverley. Here too were the Liberal grocer, butcher, and baker, for, as true liberality always begins at home, the Honourable Russell Fitz-Russell de Mowbray never patronized any but sure votes. The Middleton side of the market-place had its array of shops, duplicates of the other side. But there was a great difference between them; the De Mowbray tenants were always changing, squabbling with the steward, and altering their houses, indeed hardly a gable end remained among their dwellings; whilst the Middletonians cultivated deep windows and ends, large storehouses, and small shops, and long leases handed down from fathers to sons. They were a quiet respectable tenantry, the constant attendants at the church, little talkers at vestries or hall meetings, and so generally looked up to by the whole town as strictly honest in all their dealings, that though the De Mowbray party had succeeded in ousting their less numerous opponents from nearly every corporation office, the treasurer, and the treasurer alone, was always a Middletonian; and though at the last election the liberal banker himself had stood for the office, he was nevertheless defeated by the Middletonian draper.

The present inhabiter of River Hill, for he had no other claim to it, was the Reverend Spencer Middleton, a younger brother of the squire's, who had resided there for nearly twelve years, not only rent free, but had received a noble allowance from his brother to keep up the mansion and bring up his only boy Spencer as befitted the intended heir to the Riverley estates. The founder of the family had been one of those who at the time of the Reformation remained in the old paths, and preferred the faith of Rome to that of primitive Christianity. It was a severe blow to that honest and faithful Romanist to see his religion, the faith in which he and his sires had lived, supplanted by one which he could not but regard as a mere creature of a day. Daily did he droop, and seem to pine away in anguish for his lost faith, until at last the conversion of his only son to the reformed religion struck the final blow, and laid him on that bed of sickness from which he never rose again. During his last illness he was constantly tempted by his priestly advisers to alienate from his son his entire property, and transfer it to those who would devote it to the furtherance of the Roman faith. Long and fearful was the contest—night after night did he weigh the matter in his mind, and drive from his wearied frame that sleep which was so necessary for it. He loved his son, he dearly loved him, he saw him keeping nightly watch over him, listening to his every complaint, and, without a sigh or a murmur, anticipating rather than fulfilling every wish. Then he thought of his religion; so much power, so much property thrown into the hands of a heretic; Rome's enemy supported by the wealth of her dearest friend. Two days before his death he sent for his lawyer, and for several hours remained alone with him; no one knew or could guess at the result of that meeting, excepting that a deed was drawn and executed, and his servant called to witness it. At last the old man died, and was laid with his fathers, for though he had risen above his sires, he desired to be laid with them in the grave—death made him their equal.

The will was opened, and contained one all-important clause. He had left the whole of his property to trustees, renewable for ever, who were to permit his son, and the heirs of his son, to enjoy all the estates for their lives, without impeachment of waste. 'But,' said the will, 'should any of the possessors of this my estate, during his said possession or previous thereto, be reconverted to the holy Catholic faith, which God grant, then shall such his possession for life be forthwith and from the day of such his conversion, or as soon after as he shall come into possession, be enlarged into an estate of fee-simple.'

On this clause turned the fortune of our hero nearly three centuries after the deed was executed.

Our hero's grandfather had three sons, Aubrey, George, and Spencer. George was always, even from a boy, of a retired and deceitful spirit. He never told a direct falsehood, because he calculated that the lie, if discovered, would bring on him more harm than would compensate for the present benefit that might be obtained from it. But he would evade a question, answer away from the point with such jesuitical excuses, even when he admitted a fault, as made all regard him rather as a tool in the hands of a more powerful leader, than really penitent and sorry for his fault. In early life he had been trapped into a marriage with the daughter of his father's gamekeeper, from whom, after the birth of a son, he fled to the continent, and there immediately, with every publicity, abjured the Protestant faith, and became reconciled to the church of Rome. In a few years his poor wife died, and his son, on whom he now looked with horror, for he had entered into a Benedictine monastery, and assumed the habit of a monk, left with the relations of his mother, uneducated and unknown, at last passed away from his mind as though he had never known him. The young man spurned every proffered act of kindness from his father's relations, for he hated them for being of his father's race; he soon left Riverley, and became a wanderer about the metropolis.

Over his elder brother, Aubrey, no one had such influence as the monk; sullen and morose in his disposition, untractable even to brutality, he seemed to quail before the covert and insinuating speeches of George, before whom he dared not to show his temper, to whom he bowed, yea, even as to a

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god. It was not long after George's return from abroad that he became as a god to Aubrey. Day after day did he tempt him with the prospect of free and unfettered rule over Riverley, and set forth the high place to which the Roman Catholic lord of such estates might aspire among the most ancient families of the land; then would he pretend to defend the positions of the Protestant faith, state the case so broadly, that when answered there seemed not a tittle of evidence in its favour—hint an error here, a slight mistake there, question the character of this reformer, or the acts of that, insinuate that interest, and interest alone, had led Henry to break with Rome, and then dilate on the iniquity of the king's life, and congratulate the Protestants on the morality of their defender of the faith. In fine, Aubrey declared for Rome, and was publicly acknowledged as a convert. Years rolled on; Spencer, now a married man, the favourite mark of his brother's wit, had retired to a small living near Riverley, where he lived retired and happy. Their father was dead, and slept with his sires in the old vault; the Lord of Riverley was a declared Roman Catholic, the entail broken, and the estate entirely in his power; his priest was George, his guide was George, adviser and master his brother George. A few more years are past, the monk is dead; the manor-house, deserted by its owner, receives Spencer as its inhabitant; its lord, broken in spirit and in health, haunted by fears, crippled by disease, leads a miser's life in the environs of London, and sorrows deeply for his past offences, amassing his treasures, and knowing not who shall gather them. For twelve long years he drags on his solitary existence, whilst his brother enacts the squire's part. He has sworn to do justice to his brother, to make peace with the world, and Spencer Middleton his heir.

Spencer Middleton, not his reverend father, is my hero; let him have another chapter.

CHAPTER II.

SPENCER MIDDLETON—SCHOOL AND COLLEGE—FIRST NIGHT IN OXFORD.

In his twelfth year Spencer, then a long fair-haired boy, with bright laughing eyes, and a brow which care had never ruffled, who had never known what it was to be contradicted in the slightest wish, was packed off to one of our great public schools to learn patience, boxing, and the classics. At his first introduction to his scholastic friends at Boxinton, he sighed oft and deeply for the down bed and tender nursing of Riverley, dimmed his senior's boots with his tears as he acted as blacker, and was in all respects as miserable as a gentleman's fag should be in order to lay the groundwork of his education—patience. In a little time, that part of his education being completed to the entire satisfaction of his prefect, he was duly initiated into the art, science, and practice of boxing, diversified occasionally as a great treat with a little single-stick play, in which he was confined to guarding, whilst his instructor took the hitting part to himself. As for the third part of his education, he came on, no one knew when or how, but in no long time had established himself as first classic, and had by no means been gulphed in fisty-cuffs. The life of a public school-boy—let us be duly grateful that they are still called boys, and not the young gentlemen of Eton or Rugby—is so similar in every respect to that of his predecessors and successors, that to enlarge on his deeds at Boxinton would be but a repetition of old stories and older jokes. Of course he fagged for his time, and had fags for his time; slipped out of bounds for porter and sausages for his master, fought a due allowance of battles, and received an equal proportion of quiltings with the rest of them, as all school-boys do in novels, and in reality besides. Two of his exploits deserve recording, and two alone. The one caused him solitary confinement and bread and water for a week, the other sent him home to Riverley, not expelled indeed, but with a quiet recommendation of a private tutor as preparatory to his visit to Oxford.

The dormitories at Boxinton were in that part of the building which had been a monastery in the days of the Edwards. Between two of these rooms, in each of which were some thirty beds, a long and irreconcilable feud had arisen some years before our hero entered the school. Once every week did the tenants of the prior's room, and those of the sub-prior, have a fair and regular battle with bolsters, and every other kind of weapon which is wont to be used in the night conflicts so common in public school dormitories. To these rooms there were but too entrances, the one by a long corridor, which led to a huge oak staircase, the other by a secret winding stair, the one end of which opened into the middle of the south wall of the prior's room, the other into what was once the prior's, but now the head-master's private garden. It was near one o'clock in the morning, and the battle between the rooms raged most violently. Spencer, the watchman of the evening, was standing at the head of the staircase, ready to cut and run with the news, should he see any enemy approach. Happening to look out of the window near which he stood, whence he had a full view of the master's garden, he saw the door of the house open, and the master, the all-dreaded Doctor Woolly, proceeding across the garden towards the door of the secret stair. To run and give the alarm was useless; the doctor would be there as soon as he could, so short was the way across the lawn to the long corridor through which he must run. Close to the window ran a water-pipe, which stood a sufficient distance from the wall to admit of a man's hand behind it. Spencer looked out once at the doctor and once at the pipe; jumped on the window sill, seized the pipe, and being without shoes, managed

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to keep as firm a hold on the iron as a fly does on a pane of glass. He was down in a moment, for it was but a two-story window, and behind the doctor ere the latter could put his key into the lock. Out went the doctor's candle, and over went its owner into a lavender bush, whilst Spencer with the stolen key opened the door, and having carefully relocked it, scudded up stairs, apprised the combatants of the danger, threw the key back into the garden, and stole off to bed. Next morning the whole affair was investigated, and when no one could be persuaded to give tongue on the daring one, and the doctor threatened to wreak his vengeance on all indiscriminately, Spencer came forward, confessed the matter, got his week's imprisonment and his bread and water awarded him, the former of which he enlivened by singing songs all day long, and from the latter experienced little annoyance, from the adroit smuggling of his friends. On his release he was publicly chaired by the lower school, to which he still belonged, and elected an honorary member of their aristocratic body by the prefects.

Adjoining the school bounds was the park of a Mr. Brandywine, a rich retired ginspinner of London, who had bought the estate of Boxinton Manor from the last and poorest of its old possessors, the Boxintons of Boxinton. Across this man's park, quite away from his house, was a short cut through which the boys of the school had been accustomed to find their way home, and thus to save two long miles—a great blessing to those who had run their time to the last minute. Ever since the ginspinner had come there, he had been endeavouring to block up the track, had established a gate instead of a gap in the hedge, and when he found that the atmosphere did not agree with locks and hinges, had set a watch on the path, and determined on catching the very next intruder. It was nearly three years after Spencer's solitary confinement that a party of four Boxintonians, having but a few minutes to spare, leaped the ginspinner's hedge, and immediately lost two of their party through the strong arm of the constable of Boxinton and Mr. Brandywine's game-keeper. The news of the mishap was no sooner brought to the monastery, than a council was called by Spencer, now, by right of time and servitude, senior prefect, the roll-call was smuggled through without discovery, and a scout was sent out to discover what had become of the captives. Back came the youngster with the news of their being taken to the constable's house, as there was no cage at Boxinton that would hold even a lame duck, the door and window of the old one having long since been burnt. That night they must be released, as on the following morning they would be taken before a magistrate, and then all must come to light. So the council met again in Spencer's room. It was a cold dark December evening, the ground hard as a rock, the moon just new and rather hazy. Each prefect chose two of his best hands, enjoined obedience to orders, silence, and coolness.

It was now near six, and the roll-call would be again repeated at nine. The constable's house lay nearly three miles off, on the solitary heath of Boxinton. Sticks were now distributed to the party, P jackets buttoned up close, and black cravats transferred from the neck to the lower part of the face, that recognition might be the more difficult.

As the school clock tolled six, the party started, in three divisions of ten each. Three prefects headed each body, whilst the other two remained in the school to keep up appearances, and mystify the masters if necessary. Away went the companies each by a different route, towards the common, at a long swinging trot, which brought them all in less than forty minutes to the edge of the heath. Here they again joined company, and, having received their last orders, separated again, and proceeded to their positions. One party watched the windows, doors, and gates of the house; another separating themselves into couples, kept watch on every road and track that led towards the scene of action, whilst Spencer, at the head of his detachment, marched up to the front door, and, without any summons, drove it in, through the agency of the trunk of a small tree that happened to be nigh at hand.

'No noise,' said Spencer, as he walked into the sitting-room of the affrighted constable, where he and his wife sat drinking gin and water over the fire, and calculating the benefits of the last capture.

'Constable, where are your prisoners?'

The man stared, and seemed afraid to answer, whilst his wife proceeded to attempt a scream, which was soon stopped by a gag, just in time to prevent her noise disturbing the inhabitants of the neighbouring cottages. Seeing that resistance was in vain, the jailor gave up his key, and submitted to be gagged and pinioned, whilst Spencer, proceeding to the upper room, released the captives, summoned his forces, and set off once more towards Boxinton.

As he passed the last of the cottages on the heath, Spencer, in consideration of the constable having been merely the tool of Mr. Brandywine, knocked at the window, and, imitating a countryman's voice, informed the inmates that 'Mister Thompson would be glad if Mister Giles could come up to him in about an hour or so.' In less than two hours the whole party had returned to their rooms, the roll-call was read over, and all were there. On the morrow came the day of reckoning. Recognize the assailants the constable could not, and as Mr. Brandywine had very wisely determined to compromise the trespass, Mr. constable got nothing by his walk. Dr. Woolly, however, was not so easily appeased. He could not but feel gratified at the readiness, tact, and ability with which the rescue had been effected, but yet he felt that some notice must be taken, or all rule would be at an end. As soon as

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he declared his intention, Spencer confessed the affair; and though every one of the party immediately claimed their share in the plot, still Spencer held out, and no one could deny it, that he, and he alone, had planned and conducted the expedition. His display of right honest, public school feeling so affected the old man, that he burst into tears, and, as he left the room, could not forbear from muttering, half aloud, 'The boys are my boys—right Boxintons.'

To the entire of the party save Spencer a slight punishment was awarded, whilst the old doctor, having summoned him to his private study, told him, with tears in his eyes, that he was compelled to send him from among them, though sore against his will. 'Go,' he said, 'go, dear, generous, noble boy, and believe me it is not I who send you away, but your own act, which, though I may excuse as an individual, I cannot overlook as a master.'

That night was a night of unfeigned sorrow to every soul in the monastery. Spencer Middleton, the best friend, the truest companion, the kindest master, the bravest heart, and best head in the school, was gone. No one who has not himself witnessed the love which can be gained at a public school can rightly understand the feeling which prevailed among those old and young hearts on that sorrowful night. Home came Spencer, took to a private coach for a year, and then started for Oxford—a man.

What a philosophical crucible is a vice-chancellor's audience-room at Oxford! A college tutor, after due preparation, and mixing of ingredients, adds a youngster of some sixteen or seventeen summers to the materials; the said youngster d—ns the Pope, or, as the ancient mariner did, blesses him unawares, swears to keep the contents of a calf-bound duodecimo, kisses a book, pays some three or four pounds, and comes out a man. Medea only made old men young—the Vice makes boys into men, and that without cutting up the subject.

About a month after, Spencer proceeded to residence, under the guidance of his old schoolfellow, Tom Davis, now a two-year-old Oxonian; he secured the last place in the Blenheim—an interior—saw his portmanteau added to the luggage pile overhead, and his hat-case to the onion-string behind, and settled himself down in his corner.

'Hilloa, Davis,' sang out an outsider, 'where do you stow?'

'A babe in the wood,' replied Tom, as he paused on the steps and took a survey of the interior. 'One old woman; one saint, very fresh; ditto Spencer; and one old un'—self,' muttered Davis, as he stowed himself away by the side of our hero.

'What have you been doing, Spencer,' said Tom, 'since the Brandywine affair?'

'Cramming with Doctor Doddletum.'

'Ay, like a Strasburgh goose, for the liver complaint. Curious process, ma'am, that cramming'—the old lady opened her eyes; —'first take your goose, then two nails, then nail him down by the feet before a broiling fire, and feed him like nothing.'

'Pray, sir, what may be the good of the fire!' asked the lady.

'Big liver, ma'am, big liver.'

'But why nail the poor animal by the feet sir?'

'Why, you see, ma'am, though the caloric of the igneous matter tends to superinduce a tendency in the anseric liver to fructify, which fructification can only be maintained by the continued radiation of the aforesaid caloric, still it is absolutely necessary that the animal should be incited to voracity, in order to supply that strength which is necessary for the full development of the liver—this appetite is supplied by the nails.'

'Lord, sir, a goose eat nails!' gasped his auditress.

'Why, look you, ma'am, to speak unphilosophically—heat makes goosey's liver swell, but goosey still must eat; well, goosey does not like the fire, so he pegs away at the nails like winkin, until he gets so hungry by the exercise, that he takes to eating again; so, ma'am, the balance is maintained on the most philosophical principles—the great rule laid down by Newton, "One down, t'other up."'

Tom having fairly mystified the lady, took a nap until the next change.

'Dick,' said he to the coachman, as he got out to stretch his legs, 'who's white-face inside?'

'Mr. Abbot, St. Edmund's Hall,' replied the driver with a wink—'fresh.'

'So I guess,' said his passenger, as he got in again.

'Dreadful thing this about the tea,' observed Davis, as soon as they were off again.

'Tea, sir?' asked the female opposite, whilst the white-face put down his book and looked interested.

'Poisoned, madam!—all the last batch poisoned!'

Horror was plainly depicted on the faces of his auditors.

'My friend, Dr. Theophilus Fitzflummery, analyzed the last batch. One ounce yielded—hydrargyri damnati, three grains; ext. coloc. amari, five grains; salis dei byani, six grains.'

'Dear, dear,' said pale-face, 'I bought six pounds before I left London, only two days since.'

'May I ask where you purchased it?' inquired his tormentor.

'The Platina Tea-chest,' replied the victim.

'The Platina Tea-chest,' said Davis, musingly. 'In—in—'

'Lombard Street, sir.'

'Ay, Lombard Street. I remember Fitzflummery sent there for that which he analyzed.'

The victim looked most uncomfortable.

'I should recommend you to throw it away as soon as possible, as even the smell is poisonous, and brings on cholicum ventrale maximum.'

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'Pray, sir, do you know of any house in Oxford where non-poisoned bohea can be now obtained?' asked the freshman.

'Let me see,' mused Tom. 'Birchbroom and Beans, top of the corn-market, laid in their stock nearly two years since.'

'Thank you, sir,' replied the man. 'I suppose I shall be able to find them?'

'Plain as a pikestaff. Up Skimmery Lane, down Vanity Fair, cross Pactolus, through Christ Church, up St. Aldate's, down George Lane, through Jericho, and then first door on the left, small private house.'

'Thank you, sir, thank you,' replied the victim, jotting down his route on the fly-leaf of his book.

'And if you don't get hauled up for going after improper ladies, I'm no geographer,' muttered Davis to himself.

'Statutes, I presume,' continued Davis, pointing to the small calf-bound volume which the Edmund Hallite was digesting. 'I am glad to see you working at them; you will be quite up with them for lecture to-morrow.'

'Lecture, sir! what lecture?'

'Lecture on statutes, first day of term, eight A. M., at the vice-chancellor's—white ties and bands.'

'I am extremely obliged to you, sir,' said sappy.

'And so am I to you,' whispered Davis to our hero, 'for being such a beautiful fool. Now for a finisher with the old lady. Going to Oxford, ma'am?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Well acquainted with the place?'

'No, sir. I am going to look out for a nice college to send my nephew to.'

'Indeed, ma'am; I suppose you've got the Vice's permit?'

'The what, sir?'

'The vice-chancellor's permit, ma'am. Don't you know, ma'am, that no ladies are allowed to walk in the streets of Oxford, and much less to enter within the gates of her monasteries, without a written permission from the vice-chancellor, countersigned by the proctor?'

'Lauk, sir, you don't say so?'

'Only last term, two women—ladies—were chevied all down the High Street by the bulldogs—'

'O sir!'

'And lodged in the castle for three weeks, for walking down High Street without permission. And as for speaking to a gownsman, or entering a college, you'll be sent to the treadmill without a chance of less than six weeks.'

The old lady groaned—'What shall I do, sir?'

'Why, ma'am, you had better shut yourself up in the Angel, and then write a note to the vice-chancellor, stating that you are desirous of walking the streets of Oxford—that's the proper phrase, ma'am—and of entering into and visiting the various colleges, and requesting his permission. Send that up, and wait for an answer.'

'I am exceedingly obliged to you, sir—exceedingly.'

'Here we are, Middleton,' said his friend. 'Jump out. Give Dick a half-bull. Here, porter—Davis and Middleton, St. Luke's.

'Ay, ay, sir.'

'Come along.' And away they shot over the road to college.

'Tom!' sung out Davis, as he passed under the gate—'Tom, one devilled chicken, two pots of porter, like lightning.' And away went Tom to the buttery one way, and our hero and his friend the other, to Davis's room, to eat broiled chicken, and finish their laugh at the tea and permit affair.

About a quarter to twelve, Middleton turned into his first college bed—a very spare bed, in a very spare room. 'Come,' he thought, 'I am outrageously tired, I shall be off in no time.' Round he turned, composed his limbs, and drew down his lids. He had hardly become semi-sensible, than his college clock, just over his head, proceeded leisurely to strike the chimes and the hour. 'Well,' thought our hero, 'you'll be done soon, and then,' he would have said, 'I'll sleep,' but in cut great Tom, booming over the city; then came All Souls', followed hard by New College, backed up by St. Mary's, and but a short way ahead of Magdalen. For nearly ten minutes, the twenty-four colleges and nineteen churches in Oxford tolled out the midnight hour, and caused the sleepy Spencer to wish them at the old gentleman's palace. Who ever forgets his first night in the city of bells?

CHAPTER III.

THE COLLEGE AND ITS INHABITANTS.

As our hero was under the special protection and guardianship of Tom Davis, he was soon initiated into college life, with as few misfortunes as was possible. By the tutors he was drafted into some fifteen lectures; by the racing committee he was nailed for number two; he found a place in the archery club, credit wherever he asked for it, and companions in abundance.

'Come, Middleton,' said the venerable Tom, as he passed the bottle from his friend Gerard Hamilton to our hero, one dull November evening, some few weeks after our hero's arrival in Oxford, 'take another pull at the port, and then let us know what you think of the kennel.'

'Kennel! Davis?' said Middleton with astonishment.

'The college, the college, Spencer,' said Tom.

'O, I like it very well,' replied Spencer.

'Like it,' growled Davis, 'what on earth is there to like in it but the cook and the porter?'

'What, surly Joe?' inquired Hamilton.

'No, Barclay and Perkins, friend Gerard.'

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'Why, there's the principal,' suggested Middleton.

'Ay, old Doctor Magnificus Puff. I won't deny he's a good Don, and pulls the reading men up to the scratch; but as my health is too delicate to admit of very close application to—well, Hamilton, you may laugh, but if it were not for the porter—'

'And beefsteaks,' said Hamilton.

'Taken medicinally, as the teetotaller said when he got blind drunk, I should not be what I am.'

'The best steersman in Oxford,' cut in Hamilton.

'That's neither here nor there,' replied Tom; 'but the doctor and I don't agree. He likes Plato and Aristotle, I like—'

'Gin and water and canaster.'

'If you interrupt me again, Gerard,' said Davis, 'I'll be as dumb as a Dutchman for a month of Sundays.'

'Mum,' said Hamilton.

'Now, this little doctor not only thinks himself the head cock in Oxford, but has actually proved that he is first chop of the whole creation,' continued Davis.

'Proved himself? How do you mean?' asked Spencer.

'Why, by a sorites,' replied Tom.

'Don't know the gentleman—who is he?' asked our hero.

'What is it, Gerard?' asked Davis, rather nonplussed.

'A series of syllogisms, with all their conclusions, but—'

'Pooh, pooh, Hamilton, that's too fine. Look you, Middleton,' cut in Davis, 'you know what a plate of anchovy toast is; well, first round like the second, second like the third, third like the fourth—therefore, first like the fourth;—that's a sorites.'

'I think I see,' said Spencer.

'I wish I did—the toast,' said Hamilton.

'"Now," says Doctor Magnificus, "Europe's the first quarter of the globe; England's the first country in Europe; Oxford's the first city in England; St. Luke's'—

'Is the greatest madhouse in London,' said Gerard.

'"St. Luke's,"' continued Tom, '"is the first college in Oxford, and I'm the first man in St. Luke's—ergo, I'm the first man in the world."'

'The truth is,' said Hamilton, 'that he thinks he knows everything, and therefore not unfrequently makes a fool of himself. If he would but be content with being what he really is, a very good scholar and college Don, he would do very well; but he will have his finger in everything.'

'Mathematics to wit,' said Davis.

'Precisely so, Tom; one collections; Middleton, you know what they are,' said Hamilton.

'Terminal blow-ups,' said Davis.

'Not unlike,' continued Hamilton. 'Well, it was my second show-up, and having been tolerably good that term, the affair passed on pleasantly enough; "Mr. Perkins," said the doctor to the mathematical tutor, "has Mr. Hamilton satisfied you in his mathematics?" "Perfectly so," replied poor Screwy, "perfectly, Mr. Principal." "Ah, Mr. Hamilton," continued the doctor, "I consider mathematics absolutely necessary for the education of a Christian." I bowed. "Yes, young man, four books of Euclid, and four of algebra,"—Perkins began to burst—"are absolutely requisite for every gentleman's education." "Pray, Mr. Principal, may I ask you what four you recommend?" said I, with as serious a face as I could muster. "Oh, the four first, Mr. Hamilton—the four first," replied the doctor, highly delighted with my appeal to him. "Cocker, Walsingham, Bridge, and Wood," I suggested. "Yes, sir; yes, sir; you are a very respectable young man, Mr. Hamilton," said Puff. So I got off without bursting a blood-vessel.'

'He's a good horseman, is he not?' inquired Middleton.

'Ay, he is a good 'un. Why, he bought his nag for thirty pounds, feeds him low, and then sends him out with his servant for a couple of hours every day to take his edge off, before he rides out for his constitutional. One day last summer, when he was vice-chancellor, a party of us overtook him on the road from Wycombe; as we pelted up to him, off went his Rosinante, and in a few minutes off went the rider, and into a ditch on the roadside; one of our party, Dick Chappel, of Christchurch, got down and helped the little vice out of the ditch, rather the worse for wear. Vice thanked his deliverer, asked his name, took his card, promised a call, and then begged him not to ride on with him, as his horse was given to bolting; so with a bow away went Dick to college. Two days after the vice determined to call on his friend, and accordingly walked off in mufti to Christchurch, found out Dick's door, and gave a modest tap. "Come in," shouted out the occupant of the rooms, who was cramming a card of logic and smoking a weed at his window; "come in." "No," thought the vice, "this will be derogatory;" so there he stood and tapped again. "Come in, can't you? and don't stand knocking there," shouted Dick, taking the reverend the vice for some tailor's dun, or wine-merchant's touter. Again the vice tapped. "D—n you, you fool," sung out Dick, "go to the devil, or come in!" for Dick was just then in a mess with an undisturbed middle, which did not tend to improve either his temper or his language. The vice was shocked, slipped his card under the door, and departed. Dick heard him go, and, determined on paying him off for his knocking, he rushed into his bedroom, which looked into Quad, seized a tumbler of water, and putting his head half out of window, saw a hand protruded from the entrance door-way, to see whether it rained or no. "Here goes," thought Dick, as he shied the water out, just as the doctor was turning his eyes upwards to see whether he could discover a drop of rain; the aim had been too good, so the doctor received the present. "By the holy

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poker," said Dick, as he read the Vice's card, a few minutes after, "I've washed his reverence."

'I suppose you've heard Delany's plucked,' said Davis, as soon as he could make himself heard amid Middleton's noisy laughter.

'Plucked!' re-echoed both Middleton and Hamilton.

'Even so; he construed δικαιος ανηρ into a white horseman.'

'A white what?' asked Hamilton.

'Horseman,' replied Davis.

'Come, do let us hear,' said the friends, and Davis made himself up for a story.

'"Take that book," said Griffiths, the examiner, to Delany, pointing to an Euripides cura Tauchnitz. The poor creature obeyed, and having found out the place, began to construe. "δικαιος ανηρ," said Delany, "a white horseman; οει, always." "What do you mean, sir?" said Griff, looking half mad. Delany stared. "What is δικαιος ανηρ, sir?" "A white horseman," replied Delany, with considerable assurance. "Do you know what you are saying, sir?" "Well," said the sufferer, "I don't pretend to know all the words in these plays; but I do know that ανηρ is a man." "Certainly, sir," cut in Griffiths. "And δικαιος is a white horse," continued Delany. "How do you know that, sir?" asked his examiner. "Why, sir," said Tom, brightening up, "I looked it out in Hederic this morning." "And pray, sir, what did you find?" continued Griffiths. "Δικαιος, equus candidus." "Well, sir!" "And if equus candidus isn't a white horse, I don't know what is," replied the fated one, amid a regular roar of laughter.'

'That comes,' said Hamilton, with a slight sneer, 'of young ladies wasting their blessed little lives in torturing card-board and paper, and perpetuating miles of worsted flowers, such as Nature never saw, or hoped to see.'

'As how?' asked Davis.

'Because if they would try their hands at the Latin and Greek grammars, their sons would not make such splendid examples at Oxford,' replied Hamilton.

'What! suck in Homer with their pap, and Virgil with mother's milk?' said Middleton.

'No, learn to read their grammars at their mothers' knees, and take that part of their education so eagerly, as to be rather a pleasurable novelty, than the odious dose it becomes in a few years after,' was his friend's reply.

'Perhaps,' said Davis; 'but then there are those delectable show-schools, where the precocious infants read Æschylus before their grammars, and Thucydides before they know the outside of old Schrevelius.'

'Yes, where they learn to read Æschylus, and not Greek.'

'But why is this, Davis?' said Hamilton.

'Because the mothers like their infants to come it stronger than Mrs. B.'s, their neighbour's.'

'And all this,' said Hamilton, 'arises from their entire ignorance of the value of grammars, which might well be acquired in a short space of time, and would save many a boy from months of hard fag at school, or more distasteful cramming at college, in order that he may not conjugate cano cani at his little-go. I remember old Delafield used to say, that a mother was the best lower master for a public school, and I believe him now.'

'A parcel, sir, brought down by Black Will,' said Middleton's scout, entering the room; 'said it was of consequence, sir.'

Middleton took the packet, and opening it hastily, found a letter from his father. It was in these words.

'Long's Hotel, Wednesday.

'My dear boy,—

'Your poor uncle has been seized with so severe an attack of his old complaint, that his life is in imminent danger. I have been with him since Monday, at his earnest request. He wishes, he prays to see you directly, in order that he may do his last act of justice to the family, in the presence of us all. I fear that unless you use the utmost speed, you will hardly arrive ere he is no more, as he fails hourly. Come, my dear boy, directly, and delay not to call for me here, but make the best of your way to your uncle's, where I am sure to be.

'In greatest anxiety and haste,
'Your affectionate father,
'SPENCER MIDDLETON.'

'What can I do?' said Spencer deploringly, as he handed the letter to Hamilton. 'Dr. Puff has confined me to college for shooting that confounded cat of his; and—'

'O hang the cat and the doctor too,' said Davis; 'here, Hamilton, you're a bachelor, so cut off to the doctor's with the letter, and bully him into a permit. Spencer, get out your carpet-bag, and cram in all you want, and I'll off to Squeaker, and turn out his chariot and pair in twenty minutes, and then if you don't get to London in four hours, may I ride postillion to the old gentleman from Easter to Ballinasloe.'

Davis was not far out in his reckoning; in about half an hour our hero was flying through the turnpike in a light travelling chariot, as fast as the prospect of an extra fee and a decent allowance of thong could induce Squeaker's best pair of posters to put their hoofs to the ground. When the first whirl of the excitement was over, Spencer became truly miserable; solitary travelling even by daylight is nearly bad enough, but when to the darkness of the night was added a cool drizzling rain, that dimmed the glasses, and cast a dull chill over everything, the nature of the journey, the prospect of death which awaited him at its close, the death of one, who to him had been at least a generous if not a kind uncle, we may well conceive how the spirits of our solitary traveller sank, as his flying steeds left milestone after milestone behind them. Within

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Davis's appointed time Spencer was within the bounds of the great metropolis, whence he bade his postboys diverge from the high road, and make the best of their way towards Kilburn. His uncle's solitary residence was soon found, for Kilburn was then a country-village, and the cottage of one so wealthy, so eccentric, so charitable, as Squire Middleton, was not unknown to the poorest inhabitant of the place.

CHAPTER III.

THE INVALID'S CHAMBER.

The house to which the broken-hearted Squire of Riverley had long since retired, was no new-built impudent white-faced villa, such as now dot and spot every road, lane, and field, within that distance from the Bank which omnibus cads include within a shilling's worth; but a retired farmhouse, standing in a small garden, whence in the summer the fragrance of the rose and jasmine often floated in the sick man's chamber. For nearly a week, during which his brother had scarcely left him for a moment, Aubrey Middleton had been hovering between life and death; his body, for years powerless and attenuated, had latterly become more and more emaciated; his mind was at one time torpid, at another, wandering in delirium. With closed eyes he would lie for hours, seemingly called back to the scenes of his happy youth, muttering to himself of Riverley and his most favourite haunts, in a subdued tone—now speaking to some old servant or friend, now talking to his hounds, or even caressing, in his reveries, some four-footed pet of his childhood. Then on a sudden would the veins of his forehead swell, his eyelids be suddenly raised, and the pupil of his eyes fearfully dilated with a fixed gaze at some phantom of his brain, his hands wildly grasping at some object which he could never reach, whilst he murmured in subdued accents, 'George, brother George, save me!' and then the veins would gradually subside, the eyelids slowly fall down, and a deep and quiet sleep of several hours' duration succeed, the certain precursor of an interval of consciousness and freedom from pain. It was during one of these intervals that he besought his brother to summon our hero from Oxford, that he might see him once more ere he died—for his life was now in the most imminent danger—and might in his and his father's sight set his hand and seal to that his last will, by which the lands of Riverhill were once more, he trusted, to revert to a Protestant.

'Are you refreshed by your sleep, Aubrey?' said his brother, as he sat by the sick man's couch, and watched his gradual awakening from a long slumber produced by the opiates which had long been necessary to induce repose, and alleviate in some slight degree the spasms by which the invalid was ever and again tormented.

'Ay, sleep—sleep—sleep on for ever,' murmured the half-conscious man: 'the babe sleeps on its mother's breast, the old man in his home of earth; sleep—all sleep,' he continued, as with a glazed stare he regarded his watching brother. 'Brothers come to watch for the old man's sleep. Ah! I remember now; brother, are we alone—quite alone?'

'Yes, Aubrey,' replied his brother, 'I have sent Martha to get some refreshment, and have taken her place until Spencer arrives.'

'Is he not come?' asked the sick man.

'No, brother, it is but a few minutes past eleven, and he cannot be here until midnight.'

'It is well, brother; let the house of Middleton be present when its head is dying; no, not all of the house. George, George, where is thy son? perhaps ere this a convicted felon?'

His brother started at the last words of the invalid.

'A felon, Aubrey! know you aught of that misguided youth?'

'Hear me, Spencer; it is about two years ago, that about this time of night, whilst I lay on this couch of sickness, I heard a scuffling below; it continued but a short time, and then all became still again. Ere I could determine to disturb poor Martha, as she sat nodding over the fire, I heard cautious steps, as of men stealing one after the other up the stairs; in a moment the lock of the door turned, and two men in fustian jackets and black masks entered the room. Resistance was useless; they had evidently secured my other servants, and now that Martha was gagged, pinioned, and watched over by one of the robbers, I submitted to my fate, resigned my keys, and saw my bureau cleared of all its valuables before my very eyes. As the leader of the party was proceeding to close the bureau, one of its handles struck his mask, and tore it from his face; before he could replace it, I had recognized those features which the monk had handed down to his boy;—yes, brother, there, in this room, stood poor George's son, the robber of his own uncle. Could I prosecute him—bring one of my nearest relations—my eldest nephew—to a felon's death?—and yet, what could I do? they had been tracked and captured by an over-vigilant neighbour: O how I hated that man for his officiousness! The money was found on them, the proof was all too clear. What could I do? I bribed the attorney's clerk to whom the conduct of the prosecution was committed to make a fatal flaw in the indictment—it was done—and he was once more free. I wrote to him, I sent others to him to beseech him to accept my assistance, to retire to a quiet country life on such an allowance as would enable him to shake off his vile associates; he spurned me, he cursed me;—yes, in this room he stood, and dared me to ex-

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pose him; laughed at my threats; scouted my advice, openly cast off every relative on his father's side, and imprecated his curse on them: from that moment I cast him off.'

'Do you know anything of him now?' asked his brother.

'I have been told that he has long since left the country. I trust it is so; but I fear me he is yet in London. Sampson has told me of repeated visits here of one of those who were implicated in the robbery, and talkings with that old nurse of mine, who I fear is but a treacherous character. Hist! some one is listening at the door! Stay, Spencer, let me ring my bell; it will conclude the listening better than detection, as things are now.'

To the old man's bell his nurse's reply was almost instantaneous; indeed, she had not been above a step from the room-door during the greater part of the conversation. In a short time our hero arrived. There are scenes such as surpass the pen of every one to delineate; the meeting between the uncle and the nephew was of this kind.

Shortly after our hero's arrival Aubrey ordered Martha to descend to the sitting-room, and tell the lawyer's clerk, who had been sitting there these five hours, solacing his solitariness with brandy and water, to prepare the will for his signature, and to bring it to his room as soon as his bell should ring; she was also to fetch one of his female servants to assist in witnessing the execution.

'Brother,' he said, as soon as the nurse had closed the door, 'the time is now come that our father's lands should return to one of his own faith; on you and yours is the entire property settled; be to them, who will soon look up to you as their lord, the same as when they called you friend; but why should I tell you your duties?—promise this one thing. I have provided in my will that a small sum, about a hundred pounds, should be young George's if he should claim it. I have done this,' he continued, almost in a whisper, 'rather to enable you to learn whether he be alive or no, than with the idea of profiting him; by this I shall disappoint those to whom he may have sold his prospects at my death; but I charge you, should he claim that sum, that you make one more effort to recall him from his vicious courses.'

The bell was now rung, and the keyhole-keeper, Martha, soon introduced the half-fuddled lawyer's clerk and the requisite witnesses; the will was soon signed and attested, enclosed in its parchment cover, on which appeared in large text, 'The last Will and Testament of Aubrey Middleton, Esquire,' and deposited in the bureau, the key of which was given to the elder Spencer, the lawyer's clerk dismissed, and the sick man's chamber once more quiet.

'Leave me, Spencer,' said Aubrey to his nephew; 'your father will remain in London as long as I am alive; and, glad as I am to have seen you once more ere I die, I would now rather have you at Oxford than wasting your time in London. Return early to-morrow, and leave me to your father and my nurse. Good night, brother; pray for the old man's peace, on earth, and a painless passage for him to the grave. Farewell, my dear nephew, for ever; learn from one who once was the gayest of the gay, the most choice of the choicest spirits, that birth and wealth cannot buy off sorrows and disease, that the poor man is superior to his lord in health and happiness, and that they are but his equals in the grave. Farewell! farewell!'

Spencer and his father returned to town to their hotel, whence the former sped for Oxford on the morrow, with a saddened brow and a heavy heart, whilst the latter returned to his daily watch by the bed-side of his dying brother.

MEMOIRS OF AN ITALIAN EXILE.

BY ELI BLACKSOWN, D.D.

CHAPTER XII.

The Skirmish.

And there was mounting in hot haste, the steed,
The mustering squadron, and the clattering car
Went pouring forward with impetuous speed,
And swiftly forming in the ranks of war,
And the deep thunder peal on peal afar,
And near the beat of the alarming drum,
Roused up the soldier ere the morning star,
While thronged the citizens with terror dumb,
Or whispering with white lips—'The foe! they come, they come!'

FIORENZOLA, unlike most of our Italian boroughs, is not a walled town. It boasts of

'——— No bulwarks,
No towers along the steep,'

none of those proud monuments of by-gone greatness which add so much to the romantic and picturesque of our dismantled Italy. It is merely a market town, and owes its rise and present prosperity, I believe, to the fine cattle and the renowned dairies of its well-watered neighbourhood. It lies on an open plain, surrounded by wide pasture grounds, open to the four corners of the wind, the main road crossing it from east to west for the length of nearly a mile. The last skirts of the distant Apennines are seen sloping gently on the south, down to the verdant prairie, through which the Arda, a mountain stream, just freed from the rocky prison of its native alpine region, breaks forth, raging and roaring, in all the exultation of its happy enfranchisement.

At the distance of nearly half a mile from town, on the west, where the torrent crosses the road, a long, low stone bridge is thrown over it, and on this Captain Pelosi, finally yielding to the importunities of his officers, had consented, by way of strategic precaution, to station a detachment of twenty of our *tirailleurs*, to whom Captain Gottardi had added one of his men-at-arms on horseback. The horseman and one of the sharpshoot-

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ers performed duty together, standing on the middle of the bridge, from which they were enabled to command a vast extent of the main road and of the adjacent meadow-land. The rest of the little troop had repaired to a small hut, or toll-house, at the head of the bridge, and had there established their headquarters.

The horseman was no other than our heroic farrier, Lione, of whom honourable mention has been made in our last chapter. The sentinel on foot was a mere lad from Borgo San Donnino, by name Paolo Mazza. He was the son of a poor widow, and had been picked up by our demagogues during our short stay in that town; his young head had been filled with bright visions of glory and patriotism, to the desolation of his old mother, whose affecting parting with her son at the gates of San Donnino, on the foregoing morning, was among the incidents that had most deeply excited my interest on the very outset of that short but eventful expedition.

The night was dark, as I have already observed, and a cold north wind swept adown the open plain. The torrent, owing to the hard frost in the Apennines, and the long continuance of dry weather, was fordable in every direction. Our unsheltered sentries, perched in the middle of that low-parapeted bridge, were struggling hard against the piercing night-blast, by wrapping themselves closer and closer, over head and ears, in their martial cloaks, and, regardless of disciplinary duties, they were engaged in as companionable a talk as might be compatible with their difference of age, ideas, and pursuits, when, with the suddenness of lightning, they found themselves surrounded by a party of armed men, who jumped from the parapets as unexpectedly as if they had fallen from heaven, and before the two were well aware whether they had to deal with friends or enemies, the poor youth from San Donnino fell, without uttering a groan, pierced by more than twenty bayonet-thrusts.

The brave Lione behaved with valour and a presence of mind that could well justify his claims to that proud appellation. He snatched his heavy gabardine from his shoulders, and dealt with it so heavy a blow on the head of the luckless fellow that had ventured to seize hold of his horse's rein, that he fell back reeling and staggering among the crowd of his compeers. Then drawing his sword, and dealing blindly to the right and left, the mighty farrier succeeded in extricating himself from his, as yet, unknown assailants, and giving his horse the spur, he rode towards the main body of the little vanguard quartered in the toll-house, roaring, 'To arms!' with all the might of his lungs.

Taken by surprise, and unceremoniously roused from their slumbers, our twenty young men rushed from their night-quarters with the countenances of men determined to face the sudden danger. But after having exchanged a few random shots with those nocturnal marauders, hearing the measured tramp of several companies of infantry who advanced at the *pas-de-charge* down the bridge, they soon felt the utter impossibility of further resistance, and hurried to the town in great confusion to give the alarm.

'Fire!' 'The brigands!' 'The Austrians!' exclaimed our equestrian friends at the Osteria del Sole, rising on their elbows from their uncomfortable beds on the wooden floor of the parlour, startled by the first report of those guns. Captain Gottardi was up first of all, with his hand laid on the hilt of his broadsword. We rubbed our eyes and looked into each other's faces, listening in so awful a silence that the hearts of many of us could be heard fluttering with tumultuous emotion.

Presently a horse was heard galloping full speed on the flinty pavement of the main street. It stopped at our door, and in a few seconds our brave Lione stood before us with drawn sword.

'Arm! arm! To horse! to horse! the enemy have forced our outposts, and are pressing hard on our footsteps!'

'The enemy! what enemy!' inquired the captain.

'The brigands, the Austrians, the fiends of hell, for aught I know,' quoth the Lion. 'But we have not a moment to lose. To horse, captain, for God's sake, to horse!'

'The Austrians! impossible!' cried one.

'We are betrayed!' said another.

'Betrayed!' said the captain, frowning disdainfully; 'who betrays you? are not our horses saddled in the court-yard, and our swords by our side? To horse, Lione. Austrians, or devils, we'll meet them like men.'

Down we rushed in a crowd. In less than a minute we were all mounted. The innkeeper half dressed, holding his nether garment with his left hand, while his right threw open the stable-door, bowed to each of us as we issued into the open square, and took particular care to fasten and bar the door after us. Having thus ushered his knights into the lists, he precluded against them every chance of retreat.

The main square of Fiorenzola was yet silent and dark. Our hostelry was situated on one side of the square, facing the town-hall. A torch was burning before the door of that clumsy municipal building, and our tricolour flag was seen waving lustily from the balcony where it had been left in the evening.

'Ho!' said our captain, Gottardi, 'one of you go and fetch me that banner. 'Sdeath! those municipal cravens have deserted their post.'

I jumped from my saddle, and ran to the town-hall. It was not without difficulty that I groped my way along its dark galleries and benighted staircase. But having finally reached the balcony, I snatched up our national standard and handed it to our chieftain.

'Now, my friends,' said our captain, in a blunt and plain mode of harangue. 'Nothing can be easier than to do as I bid you. Let your pistols sleep in their holsters. It is a dark night, and fire-arms can be of no use. Draw your swords, and when I say "Charge!" plunge your rowels into your horses' sides and follow. Mind you don't lose sight of me. As long as you can get a glimpse of these colours,' said he, waving his banner after the most approved style, and with an air that reminded me of Henry IV. and his *panache blanche*, 'be sure to follow. Strike for God and our country!'

Then he moved off, pacing leisurely towards the invaded bridge. The mighty cavalcade, mustered up in five ranks, advanced. It was a solemn and an anxious moment. The eyes of all were turned towards the western avenue of the town

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whence the first alarm had been given. On that side, however, all was still, and as far as our eyesight could reach through the dead, dark night, the streets were empty and mute.

Our drawn blades were now gleaming ominously in the pale light of that solitary beacon, and our eyes were widened and strained in our eagerness to pierce through the gloom. As it was in that hour when all colours melt into one sable hue, I cannot fairly assert that the cheeks of none of us were blanched, and that our pulses beat calm and regular in presence of that imminent and yet vague and indeterminate danger. All I can say is that we stood at our post and gained our ground, in the best order and silence, and I owe my comrades this justice, that, whatever their feelings in the circumstance, they all seemed to breathe freely and await the result of that doubtful conflict with all the firmness and dignity of experienced warfarers.

I know not, however, dear reader, how far you will credit my words. If you are an honest John Bull of the old school, and will therefore scarcely allow that any man may have blood in his veins unless he feed on English roast beef and plum-pudding; if you have made up your mind to admit as gospel all you read of the faint-heartedness of the southern race from which I sprang, and implicitly rely on the witty anecdotes collected by your clever tourists; if you think, with Ferdinand of Naples, that his cuirassiers should wear a back, instead of a breast-plate, the back being the only part that Italians ever show to their enemies; if you believe, with Charles Felix of Sardinia, that, train them as you will, Italians will ever fly 'fuggiranno sempre:' then I stand judged and sentenced—then I am, to make use of one of your phrases, 'done and dished.' Then it is useless for me to say—for you will only look upon it as a vain bragging of a second Bombastes Furioso—that never in my whole life did I feel my heart expand with such a trance of ineffable delight; never did my face glow with such a flush of intense heat; never did such a thrill of wild combativeness run throughout my veins, as when I found myself for the first time in the cold open night air, mounted on my brave steed, brandishing my brown scimetar, standing, as I firmly believed, in presence of my country's foes.

So easy, I then thought, and think so still, it is to bring into the field and teach even the rawest recruits how to behave with honour and bravery; so soon learnt, so simple, so natural to man is that soldier's trade to which the northern nations seem to attach such a paramount importance, and to their superiority in which, they think, are the present division and vassalage of our devoted country to be mainly attributed. That we are enslaved and divided, is most undoubtedly true; so, however we may, individually, smart under it, the charge of cowardice is one from which, as a nation, as long as we remain as we are, we cannot escape.

Our small column advanced, with four abreast, along the narrow street; we had reached the outskirts of the town without meeting one living being. But as we cleared the last houses, a wide array of men and bayonets were seen drawn up in a formidable line before us, covering the road and the meadows around as far as our eyes could reach, all dark and silent, like a legion of phantoms.

'Qui fa là?' cried a shrill northern voice, with a strong German accent.

'Italia e libertà,' was the reply, uttered in the firm, deep tones of the south. It was the voice of our undaunted leader.

'Fate foco,' again shouted the counterfeited Italian voice from the opposite ranks, and instantly a lightning rent the air, and was immediately followed by the detonation of no less than three hundred muskets.

The shots were aimed at chance, and from a considerable distance; so that, however strange it may appear, none of them had fatal consequences. But the suddenness and violence of that tremendous explosion so dazzled and scared our ill-trained horses, they began so furiously to plunge and rear, they became so ungovernable, that as we were immediately afterwards saluted by a second discharge, we gave it up in despair, and were, willing nilling, brought back in great disorder to the square.

'*Dio Sacrato!*' swore our captain, in a towering rage, as he arrived the last, accompanied by his lieutenant, Modesti, and the brave Lione, after having honourably covered our precipitate retreat. '*Dio Sacrato!* have you got no bridles or spurs, that you suffer your horses to get the best of you? However,' he added, with a deep sigh, 'all the saints of heaven could not help us through that forest of bayonets. Come! we must to the head-quarters: we must join our commander-in-chief.'

The head-quarters were at the 'Osteria del Cervo,' on the eastern end of the town. So eastward we moved—I am grieved to say—from the enemy.

All began to be stir and bustle from this side of the town. As we advanced with our wonted cautiousness and on our guard, we were met by a few of our young national guards, who, distributed as they were in private lodgings, had dressed themselves in great haste, and loaded their guns, issuing from the houses, by two, by three, by small parties, at a loss what to do or whither to go. Various and extravagant was the information we picked up on our progress.

'The brigands, sir, ay, ay,' cried one, 'they are coming down from the road of the Apennines.'

'The Austrians, by Jesus,' shouted another. 'I have seen many hundreds coming up from the rice-grounds.'

'The Hungarians, brave captain,' said a townsman; 'there are many of their hussars stationed at Widow Melli's farm, on the bank of the river.'

'This way, my friends,' screamed another. 'You are just marching into the lion's jaw: we are encompassed on all parts: half the garrison of Placentia is here.'

Presently a drummer of the national guard came down the main street from the east, belabouring his instrument with a zeal and intrepidity that Napoleon would have rewarded with a red riband.

'Stop your infernal noise, you fool,' exclaimed our incensed captain, distracted by so many alarming tidings; 'what the devil are you about?'

'The *generale*, sir captain,' answered the fellow. We knew him: he was a poor hatter's

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boy from town, who having been refused as a fusileer, on account of his stature, had volunteered his services to his country in that humbler capacity. 'I am waking the sleepers, sir, to call them to their duty.'

'Good,' said the captain; 'where is captain Pelosi?'

'Gone, sir; gone to meet the enemy.'

'The enemy! but where is the enemy?'

'Plenty of 'em, sir! 'Tis here, there, and everywhere. Please make haste, sir; Captain Pelosi and the grenadiers of the line are gone to meet 'em.'

'Rap on, then, my friend, there's a good fellow,' said Gottardi, as we passed on. The good fellow, encouraged by the captain's flattering appellation, redoubled his efforts, and went rapping on with admirable activity, till he was met by a party of Hungarians who hewed and trampled him down.

Meanwhile a brief consultation took place between Gottardi and his lieutenant. The two officers marched at the head of our little column, while Lione and I, who followed at a little distance behind, were enabled to hear their conversation.

'What's to be done, Modesti? I hear no report of muskets. By G—d, our commander has bolted.'

'Likely enough, if he was warned in time. We shall not get out so cheaply.'

They were right in their surmises. A countryman from a neighbouring farm, awakened by a company of hussars, who wished to force him to show them the way, had providentially made good his escape, and hurried to the Osteria del Cervo, where the Commander Pelosi, the three commissaries, and a few other officers, profiting by that timely information, and seeing the utter madness of useless resistance, had called to arms the sixty grenadiers of the line, quartered at the casern, and at their head stolen out of town, directing their course towards the hills, through a mountain path that had hitherto escaped the notice of our nocturnal invaders; thus leaving the divided and unprepared national guards to shift for themselves as they could best.

Those of our young tirailleurs who had been undutiful enough not to comply with the commander's injunction in the evening, and had not gone to sleep, had, on the first report of hostilities, crowded to the head-quarters, where having found the house deserted, and their rulers gone, they had entrenched themselves within the walls of the hostelry, uncertain what course to pursue.

The Osteria del Cervo was, as we have said, situated at the entrance of the town on the eastern side, and faced the main road that led to Borgo San Donnino. Our enemies had so warily encircled us on all sides, that before the bridge on the Arda was attacked on the west, a battalion of Hungarians was equally stationed on the eastern road, and we were so completely beleaguered, that, with the exception of Captain Pelosi and his followers, none of us had a chance of escape.

Our captain and his fellow officer, Modesti, were well aware of our situation. 'Well, my friend,' concluded the captain, 'there is no other remedy; we must cut our way through thick and thin, and get out through the midst of them.'

But the brave Modesti shook his head moodily, and as, before being a fencing-master and a soldier, he had been a bit of a scholar, he uttered solemnly, with death's prophetic tone,

'Venit summa dies et ineluctabile tempus.'

By this time we approached the Osteria del Cervo: our band halted at a little distance, our two officers, Lione and I, advancing alone to reconnoitre.

A body of Hungarian cavalry was seen slowly advancing from the road, headed by a tall dark man, wearing the tri-cornered hat of Maria Louisa's dragoons. He rode alone several rods in advance of his troop; as he arrived at about fifty paces from the inn, he was challenged by a sharp voice from the windows. I recognised the voice of our riotous revolutionist, Count Berardi.

'Halt!' cried the count. 'Stop, or by God Almighty you are a dead man.'

'Lay down your arms, ye rebels,' cried the horseman; 'surrender, ye traitors, or you will die on the gallows.'

'Brigadier Anselmi, I know you,' replied the count; for that was indeed one of the non-commissioned officers of Maria Louisa's dragoons, and was well known as one of the most zealous and insolent satellites of the ancient government. 'We have old scores to settle between us. One step farther, by God, and I fire.'

The brigadier nothing daunted, rode forward; but he had scarcely advanced a few steps, when he rolled on the dust, struck on the head by the unerring carbine of the young nobleman.

The Hungarian hussars rode forward to the rescue of their leader. But as they advanced blindly and madly, without any determined purpose, they found themselves exposed to the galling fire of our thirty riflemen, hidden behind the windows, so that after a vain disorderly charge which brought them nearly to the door of the inn, they were obliged to fall back in utter confusion, many of them leaping over the ditches and galloping away through the open country.

'Now is our turn, my lads,' cried our captain; 'charge, my friends—charge, in God's name, and viva l'Italia!'

So off we started unanimously. The captain, his lieutenant, Lione and I, were riding in front, all abreast, while the other ranks followed at no great distance behind in the best possible order. We had soon overtaken the fugitives, who, already disbanded and disheartened, gave way before us, and hastened to join their comrades on the fields, leaving us the sole masters of the road.

Presently we came into contact with a body of infantry. The day began slowly to dawn, and we were almost enabled to descry their white Austrian uniform.

'Halt, wer da!' cried their sentinels, or something that sounded like it, evidently mistaking us for their Hungarian brethren; but without giving them time to recover from their error, without slackening our course, without uttering one word, down like thunderbolts we plunged among them.

For the whole world I would not give the excitement of a moment like that!

Our gallant captain had couched in rest the spiked staff of his flag, as we closed upon our adversaries; and one of them fell before him, pierced through the body. The weighty farrier and his still weightier charger dashed through the ranks with the impetuosity of an avalanche, and

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opened a breach through which my slenderer steed could plunge with comparative security. I thought I saw a tall swarthy Croatian standing on my way with his bayonet levelled to my horse's breast. The generous animal gave a sudden bound, and reared up in a fright. For a moment I thought I had lost all control over him, and gave myself up as undone, but Lione, who saw me in jeopardy, seized hold of the rein of my restive steed, and by all the might of his iron hand forced me along in his course.

I bit my nether lip and set my teeth hard, and brandishing my sword with so frantic a rage that the weapon quivered in my grasp, I aimed at the Croatian a blow which I flattered myself would have power to cleave that famous giant helmet,

> 'Which fell from the sky,
> And stuck very hard
> In the tilting yard
> Of the castle of Otranto.'

My ponderous *Oderisi* fell with all its weight upon something that rang under the stroke; what, however, the result of the stroke was I never had means to ascertain, for, dragged by my valiant comrade, in less than three seconds I found myself clear of the enemy, and out of the mêlée.

The Austrians, thus taken by surprise, were not, however, slow in recovering from their panic. They rallied, they closed their ranks after us; they drove back with their bayonets our less fortunate companions, and turning abruptly, they sent volley after volley in our direction, which had the effect of adding wings to our flight.

On we rode for our lives, without looking backwards, till we were fairly out of reach of their shot. The moment we halted, my poor charger gave one more desperate plunge, and fell, head foremost to the ground—the Croatian had buried his bayonet in his breast.

'My poor horse,' cried I, as I jumped on my feet, with the assistance of the brave Lione, who seemed to take care more of me than of himself; 'but,' I added, with a feeling of pride, 'I hope my hand has avenged his fate.'

So saying, I lifted up my claymore, and what was my surprise when I saw that brave ancient blade on which I had put such implicit reliance, which I had selected as the best in a hundred, broken in twain! What resistance that trusty weapon might have met that could so successfully resist the much-lauded temper of its old steel, I was at a loss to divine; for whatever opinion I might entertain of the thickness of an Austrian skull, still I flattered myself that nothing less solid than an anvil could stand the weight of my blow.

However, there I was, dismounted and pretty nearly disarmed, and not a drop of blood on my shattered blade to soothe my sorrow for the loss of my charger.

'Turn to the right,' said our captain, 'and leave your dead horse on the road; our friends are not able to follow us, and we must provide for our safety.'

So saying, he led the way through a narrow waggon-road, overgrown with thick bushes on both sides, and winding through the verdant prairie to the south-east.

No sooner had we disappeared behind the shrubs that hid us from the main road, than we heard the tramp of the Hungarian cavalry, which, having rallied around the battalion we had almost miraculously cut our way through, galloped furiously on our footsteps.

We counted more than fifty of them. On they rode, in hot haste, waving their broadswords aloft, uttering their savage war-cry: away they passed, enshrouded in a cloud of dust, unaware that the objects of their pursuit were riding safely and leisurely on their way to the Apennines. We stopped to look after them, and I could scarcely refrain a cry of admiration at the glorious inspiriting sight.

But as one of their stragglers came last and alone, making his best speed to join his companions, our brave Lione sprang forward like a panther from his thicket, and assailed the Hungarian with so felon a shock, that man and horse went down rolling and sprawling on the dust.

'Here's a horse for you, young gentleman,' cried the sturdy farrier, as he led by the rein, as a prize of victory, the charger of his fallen foe. I jumped on the empty saddle, and we were now enabled to set off at full speed.

We had scarcely ridden half a mile, when the lieutenant, Modesti, who had followed in silence, suddenly reined up his horse.

'Ride on, captain, and heed me not,' he said faintly; 'I am a dead man.' As he said these words he dropped from his saddle. He had been shot through the loins, as we ran from the Austrian infantry, and had thus far, with heroic firmness, continued his course, regardless of his wound, till, exhausted with the loss of blood, and overcome by the faintness of death, he sunk to the ground, whence he was never to rise.

We all alighted and crowded round him. He waved his hand with impatience, and motioned us away.

'Heed me not; I am a dead man. Take care of yourselves. Farewell!' Then he sank down once more, and murmured a few unintelligible syllables, among which I thought I could make out the words of his favourite quotation from the Latin poet:

'Venit—summa dies—et ineluctabile tempus—'

There he died!

The day had now fully dawned, and the pale light of the morn rested faint and languid on his exanimated face. The last sounds of the receding Hungarian squadron died away in the distance, and the sharp firing at Fiorenzola, of which the frequent report had accompanied us during our hasty retreat, had now either entirely ceased, or was lost in the vastness of the deserted plain. There was nothing to interrupt the imposing solemnity of the hour, and overawed by the sudden calamity that deprived our country of so valuable a champion, we stood for several minutes with our eyes riveted on that manly countenance already reposing in the calmness of death.

At length the captain broke silence.

'Farewell, then, brave Modesti, and may we all live to avenge thy death!' Then, stooping on the dead body, he laid his hand on the sword, which the lieutenant held still unsheathed in his grasp; but meeting with some resistance on the part of the rigid hand, which clung to the hilt

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with all the tenacity of death, 'Well, so be it, then,' said Gottardi; 'rest thy sword with thee, my poor friend, since it could never pass into better hands. De Negri,' he added, throwing his flag towards me, as he sprang on his saddle, 'there is a weapon for you. I thought you might just as well inherit the sword of our lieutenant—but let the dead have their own way.'

The firing had ceased, as I said, and everything seemed to announce that the unequal combat had been brought to a close. We had found no trace, we had heard not a word of Captain Pelosi and the main body of our little army, which he had so successfully led out of danger, and nothing remained for us but to look for the shortest and surest way to our metropolis. To Parma, therefore, we determined to ride; and, guided by a peasant lad who volunteered his services, we rode across hills and dales, always on the outskirts of the Apennines, till after a toilsome march of three or four hours, we arrived in sight of San Donnino.

The Austrians, we soon learnt, had not appeared before that place. Those Hungarians who had been sent to scour the main road on our tracks, had ridden no farther than to the bridge of the Sirone, a torrent flowing at the distance of three miles from Fiorenzola, and which in olden times constituted the boundary between the Parmese and the Placentine territory. There they halted and encamped for a few hours; but, after a vain display of equestrian evolutions, and a lusty blowing of trumpets, intended probably as a proclamation of their glorious victory, they raised their camp and marched back for their breakfast to the head-quarters.

On our arrival at Borgo San Donnino we found the little place plunged into a terrible alarm. Captain Gottardi, aware of the influence that a man of his rank and character might exercise among the good people of that town, resolved to remain at Borgo, in order to make the best of the shattered old walls, and of the ill-armed militia of the place, to oppose the progress of the Austrians, who, he could not doubt, would make all possible speed to march against Parma.

At Borgo, therefore, we parted. Gottardi, and L'one who was to serve him as his aide-de-camp, took up their quarters at the Town Hall, and I received orders to repair with all diligence to the capital, to bring tidings of our mishaps at Fiorenzola.

Every one must be aware what imperfect and unsatisfactory account I could give of that nocturnal affray. It was only after several days, that, comparing notes with some of my friends, who were up and in arms before us, and others that remained in the beleaguered place long after we had made good our retreat, I was finally enabled to master all the circumstances of that most untoward event.

It appears, then, that at about a quarter past ten in the evening, a body of twelve hundred Austrian infantry, and two hundred horse, led by Maria Louisa's brigands, at the head of whom rode the brigadier Anselmi, started from the citadel of Placentia, taking the best precautions to elude the vigilance of the town. They had marched during the whole night, and arrived at Fiorenzola two hours before daybreak. There they had distributed themselves into various detachments, with admirable manœuvres contriving to possess themselves simultaneously of every avenue that led to the town. Their plan of encompassing us all around before any alarm could be given, was, as we have seen, partly frustrated by that farmer's boy, who, terrified and breathless, had run to town, startling with his amazing tidings, the still perplexed and incredulous Captain Pelosi.

Had our commander-in chief thought less of himself and preserved sufficient presence of mind to act coolly and deliberately, he might, with the sixty well-disciplined men he had already under arms, and with our little body of national cavalry, have kept the Austrians in check until, at least, our youths had been roused from their slumbers, when we could at our choice either have forced our way through the enemy, or fought with considerable advantage behind shelter of the houses.

But the suddenness of the attack, the number of our assailants, exaggerated, no doubt, by the terrors of this boorish messenger, and above all the flagrant breach of that non-intervention of which he was one of the stanchest propugners, so overcame the otherwise imbecile understanding of our good generalissimo, that he thought if he could only get out of the scrape with all those who were ready to follow him in his flight, he would have reason to thank his good stars during the rest of his life.

He marched off towards the Apennines, as we have said, and after having entangled himself in strange and narrow defiles, he led his troops, weary and starved, at dead of night, to Borgo San Donnino.

Irritated at the sight of so many of those whom they already regarded as their prisoners, so easily eluding their grasp, the Austrians invested more closely, without, however, venturing to enter the town. A detachment of Tyrolese sharp-shooters were ordered to possess themselves of the bridge on the Arda, and their sudden and well-managed, but not altogether successful attack, had given rise to that first alarm that had roused the silent town from its slumbers, and called us into the field.

Out of twenty horsemen that we had mustered in the field, only four, the reader is aware, had the good luck to carve their way through the iron circle with which we had so unwittingly suffered ourselves to be encompassed all about by our wary assailants. Our followers, entangled among those same ranks we had so happily and so valiantly pierced through, were driven back at the point of the bayonet, and hurried to the town to place themselves under shelter of the fire of our brave *tirailleurs* at the Osterea del Cervo.

Before the walls of that ever-memorable hostelry the main action was now reduced. The doors of the courtyard had been thrown open to receive our routed horsemen, and the few other militiamen, who wandered from street to street uncertain of their fate.

On their part, the Austrians, feeling now the necessity of coming to a decisive engagement, poured down *en masse* from the six different avenues of the town they had hitherto so closely blockaded, and chasing before them the few helpless stragglers they met on their path, they all crowded—a tremendous host—before the walls of that inn which our daring rebels had, like Don Quixote, dignified into a citadel.

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There began a lively and obstinate *fusillade*; and although the Austrians kept themselves at a reasonable distance, although the double-barrelled guns with which most of our sportsmen-warriors were armed were ill suited to cope with the formidable rifles of the famous Tyrolese sharp-shooters, still the fortune of the day seemed, for some time, in favour of the small number. No less than thirteen Austrians lay stretched under the walls of the inn, while our friends, thanks to their sheltered position, escaped almost altogether unscathed. The front of the house in the morning appeared all dotted and scored with the effects of the leaden hail that had been uselessly showered against it.

The fire of our brave patriots, however, was silenced, owing to the scantiness of their ammunition and the mad prodigality with which it was wasted; and the besieged, reduced to their last cartridge, found themselves at length at the discretion of their enemies.

Luckily for them, the Austrians dared not or cared not to pursue their advantage any further; and, either through prudence or humanity, they seemed abhorrent from the scene of strife and bloodshed that would have been the consequence of any attempt on their part to take the house by storm; and leaving a strong body of their infantry to guard that well-garrisoned but ill-ammunitioned fortress, they hastened to secure the rest of the town.

'Twas morning meantime, and the honest burghers of Fiorenzola, though not a little panic-struck at the bloody drama that had been acting within the peaceful precincts of their walls, yet began to stir from their beds. They peeped out of the windows; they called to each other across the street; they congratulated each other on being yet alive, and reassured by prevailing silence, the boldest ventured to throw ajar the shutters of their shops.

They looked with awe and mistrust on the flushed faces of their hungry northern conquerors, not well satisfied with the share that their larders and cellars might come in for, in the tribute that would most probably be exacted from the town as the prize of combat. There was a stir, a bustle, a whispering, an ominous staring and wondering, which seemed to foretoken the most appalling events. Mingled with the crowd of those gaping townspeople, disarmed, crest-fallen, uncockaded, might be seen a few stray members of our dispersed national guard, who either voluntarily issued or forcibly expelled from their hosts' inhospitable dwellings — inhospitable through fear — had rid themselves of their arms and national insignia, and walked uneasily about, looking as foolish and sheepish as may well be imagined, with no better hope than either to pass unobserved and be lost among the crowd of the inoffensive natives, or to be enabled to sneak out through some unguarded outlet, and baffle the pursuit of their foe.

The number of these luckless wretches so unwittingly entrapped considerably increased, when 'In the name of Maria Louisa, archduchess, &c., duchess, &c., and by the order of the Cavalier De Ferrari, commissary extraordinary, &c., and of Colonel Radivisky, of Archduke Leopold's hussars, it was enjoined to all and each of the inhabitants of the loyal borough of Fiorenzola, and of its immediate appurtenances, that whosoever of them had either voluntarily or compulsorily given shelter, lodged, fed, and entertained any of the rebels belonging to the *soi-disant* national guard from Parma, should, within an hour from the promulgation of the present edict, eject the intruders from their domicile, and convey their arms, stores, ammunitions, &c. to the Town Hall, under penalty of incurring themselves the charge of rebels and traitors, and being treated with all the severity of the martial laws.' It was added, that wherever the townspeople should meet with any resistance on the part of the intruders, 'they could rely on the support and armed interference of the troops of her majesty, and of those of her august father and ally, Francis I., emperor of Austria, &c. &c.'

This precise and peremptory proclamation, backed as it happened to be by twelve hundred bayonets, could not be void of effect on the simple minds of the alarmed townsmen; and although there were not a few that braved the danger to the last, and vindicated, with passive resistance, the sanctity of their dwellings; although a few others found themselves hectored and browbeaten in their own houses by our audacious rebels, who, with the dogged determination of wolves at bay, refused to abandon their place of refuge, and kept their hosts prisoners under their own roofs — with these exceptions, I say, the order of the commissary was executed to the letter; most of the landlords beset with tears and supplications their troublesome visitors; they pleaded their own state of utter helplessness, the dangers to be apprehended from the brutality of an exasperated soldiery; in short, they reasoned, remonstrated, conjured their guests out of their doors.

'Great was our astonishment,' said my friend Pippo Galli, the armourer's son, from whom I derived all the information relating to this part of my narrative, who had been one of the brave *tirailleurs* at the Osteria del Cervo, and soon after the cessation of their firing had, with his thirty companions, been let out by mine host of the 'Stag Inn,' through a secret door at the back of the stables, and wandered with many others in quest of a good opportunity of escape.

'Great was our astonishment, but greater our uneasiness, as we met on the square, without daring to address each other, or to raise our eyes into each other's faces. We put on our boldest look as we walked by the long rows of Austrian infantry, who, resting on their muskets, gazed vacantly and listlessly upon us in return.

'However, as long as we had only to deal with those brutal northerners,' said my good Pippo, who, as a good Parmese,

'Era nemico alla Tedescheria'

—'As long as we were suffered to wander unmolested among the motley group of the churlish peasants, things went on smoothly enough. We lighted our cigars for the sake of company; strolled up and down with perfect unconcern, humming and whistling our favourite tunes, making ourselves utterly new to the business, staring and gaping like the rest, and wondering what the devil had happened.'

But when among the ranks of the Austrians they began to descry other and better-known faces; when they saw the *mouchards* of Maria

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Louisa's carabineers, performing the odious office of blood-hounds to their uninitiated allies; when a few among our patriots, either by the direction of the gendarmes, or betrayed by their beards, by their looks or bearing, were picked out from the midst of the crowd and laid hold of by those rude customers, and with a hemp rope tied round their necks dragged with every kind of ill-treatment to the Austrian head-quarters at the Town Hall; 'then,' said Galli, 'I confess that the darkest thoughts shot across my fevered brain, and grasping the hilt of my dagger, which I still hid under my waistcoat, I prepared, since I looked upon myself as a dead man, to sell my life at the dearest rate.'

It was thus that Crispo, Lusieri, Marchi, and my fellow captive Gasparino, the *petit-Savoyard*, with perhaps fifty others, fell into the hands of our adversaries, whilst their captors very ostentatiously purchased a few halters from a rope-maker's shop in the square, wherewith they loudly proclaimed in their broken Italian they were going to hang the rebels from the Town Hall windows, as soon as they had taken their breakfast.

This news spread fresh alarm among the compassionate country folks of Fiorenzola, many of whom, especially the women, by their awkward signs of condolence, by pointing to the poor wights whom they looked upon and bewailed as devoted victims, most unwittingly designed and betrayed them to the vengeance of their persecutors.

'This,' again observed Galli, 'I began to think, would never do;' and roused by despair into immediate action, whilst many were providing for their safety by absconding to the churches, or other public buildings, he nodded to five or six of our most noted dare-devils, walked deliberately from the square, and crossed street after street at random, till they arrived in sight of the open country.

The entrance was, at this as at every other avenue, completely blocked up with soldiers, but *tout-en-ayant-l'air* of not minding them in the least, our young captives perceived with inward glee that there were no officers among them.

'A good German,' observed Galli, 'never presumes to think for himself.' *Pensa caporale* is the watchword among the Austrian soldiery; so our friends walked on deliberately on the very toes of the good Croatians, who stared at them with a puzzled face, suspecting, perhaps, that all was not quite right, but never taking it into their heads that they were in the least authorized to interfere.

So they passed one after another, walking leisurely, talking calmly, gesticulating and switching their canes, looking like fine gentlemen bound on a matutinal excursion. But no sooner had they got clear of the redoubted line, no sooner did they see the wide country lying invitingly open before them, than, Galli foremost, clapping his hands with wild exultation, and crying at the top of his voice, 'Devil take the hindmost,' they all took to their heels.

'Bricanti! Bricanti!' shouted the Germans, now aware of their error; and about a score of them fired their muskets and darted after the fugitives. But the Italians ran for their life, and the Austrians for their kreutzer a day; besides, these last had had no breakfast, and had watched the whole night; moreover the grass was wet, half-frozen, and slippery, and the sharp north wind blew piercingly against their faces. Besides, their officers were not there. They soon gave up the chase; and our naughty young patriots, seeing themselves at a safe distance, had impudence enough to turn round and look back grinning and grimacing, and—if I can thus design a vulgar but most significant gesture, for which I know no better expression—*thumb-and-fingering* at their baffled pursuers.

The good success of the daring attempt of Galli and his followers gave encouragement to many others of our ensnared associates, so that either through similar clandestine evasions, or through the sympathy of the townspeople, who afforded them the means of escape or concealment, the greatest number were fortunate enough to avoid falling into the hands of the Austrians, till noon, when with universal astonishment, the colonel commanding the expedition ordered the *generale* to be beaten, mounted his horse, marshalled his troops, led out his prisoners, and prepared to march back to Placentia. The Austrians had already stripped all the myrtle boughs from a neighbouring churchyard to ornament their bonnets with the leaves of that national emblem of victory; so with all their colours unfurled, their drums rolling, and their *fanfares* braying lustily, the victorious host moved triumphantly away from the scene of their gallant exploits.

Thus ended the campaign and battle of Fiorenzola, in which—to assume the lofty strain of historical narration—the glory of the day is to be adjudged to the Austrians, who by their unlooked-for attack, by their able combination of wary manœuvres, succeeded in surprising, surrounding, and disabling their unsuspecting adversaries, without running the chances of a serious engagement; whilst, notwithstanding the blind confidence, the relaxation of discipline, and the total disregard of the most obvious rules of military caution, which our commander in-chief suffered to reign in his camp, notwithstanding the rather precipitate retreat with which in the hour of need he withdrew with the most effective body of his little army; full justice is to be rendered to the self-possession, calmness, and intrepidity of those few among the Italians who were allowed by circumstances to have a share in the action.

The bearer of the tidings of that unlucky but not inglorious encounter, I rode in great haste towards our threatened metropolis; my heart beat with a mingled feeling of awe and exultation at the thought of the tremendous sensation that my news would create among our unprepared fellow-citizens. I brought with me the solution of long doubts, the disenchantment of fond illusions, the dissipation of a great bug-bear—the breach of the Non-Intervention. 'Now,' thought I, 'there is an end to all hesitations and tergiversations. Thank God, the Austrians have spared us the trouble of cutting the knot.'

As I was thus soliloquizing I arrived in sight of the Porta Santa Croce; it was then nearly twelve o'clock at noon, and the long street that leads to the main square of our little capital was, as usual in those days of liberty, almost obstructed by a crowd which increased as I advanced. I was soon recognized, and as it was generally known

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that I formed part of the expedition, they began to wonder what the matter could be. But their surmises and conjectures were soon changed into loud exclamations of utter amazement; they crowded around the messenger of evil news with an eagerness and anxiety of which I was at loss how to guess the real cause. All-engrossed by the excitement of the events of the morning, all-absorbed in the meditation of its probable consequences, I was not aware that the horse I rode on wore the trappings and insignia of the imperial cavalry, and that the letters 'F. I.' (Francis the First) were written in red characters on the white cloth of his housing. 'The Austrians! The enemy! You have met the enemy!' But to all these and a thousand other questions and vociferations, I made no answer. I forced my good Hungarian through the thronged mob, and made my best speed till I alighted at the door of the palace, and was immediately ushered into the presence of the honourable members of our Provisional Government.

THOU ART NOT BEAUTIFUL.

A BALLAD.

BY MRS. VALENTINE BARTHOLOMEW.

Thou art not beautiful nor fair,—
Yet, when I watch thy smile,
I know the thoughts that linger there
Are all devoid of guile.
I would not change thy pleasant face
For one whose classic brow
A regal coronet might grace,
But be *less* loved than thou.

Thou art not beautiful nor fair;
But beauty is a flower
That blossoms in the summer air,
And shuns the wintry hour.
Thy loveliness is in thy mind,
Where pure affection dwells,
And in thy gentle heart I find
A thousand magic spells.

MEMORIES OF GIBRALTAR.*

No. III.

Terrified and vexed, Sophia paced her chamber, pausing to catch the faintest sound that might proceed from the lips of the drunkard. His ashy face, cold hands, and the death-like stillness that pervaded every limb, was so appalling, that it required the utmost exertion of her reason to assure her that he still lived. Sometimes she sought his pulse—it was oppressed and languid; then she bent over to ascertain that he yet breathed, but the fumes arising from his blackened lips disgusted her, and she threw open the casement to relieve the suffocating sensation that was stealing over her frame. Painfully waned the hours, unvaried except by the groans of the sleeper, who, as time went on, began to struggle with the sickness that succeeded insensibility. Still Sophia attempted not to retire;—memories of the past, and anticipations of the future, crowded on her mind. She thought how bright the world's glories had appeared to her, how perfect she had believed the happiness of those who flitted amidst splendour and gaiety; she had attended the advantages once believed so valuable—and was she happy?—no! She remembered the joyous buoyancy of her unmarried life, and wondered whither had fled the contentment of her youth.

Macgregor was not a person to love or to be beloved; but she had ever laughed at the passion, and thought herself insensible to its power. He was not unkind, nay, he was considered a most indulgent husband, for he was always ready to escort her into public, and, on retiring, never failed to conduct her to her carriage. Was not that marvellous attention? He neither circumscribed her expenses nor amusements, and what more could a *reasonable* woman desire? But Sophia, I suppose, was not reasonable, for, with all this, she felt that she was not happy.

Whilst absorbed in unenviable reflections, the notes of a guitar stole gently on the silence of the night. It sounded close under the balcony. She extinguished her lamp, lest its light should betray her to the musician, and it required not the throbbing of her heart to inform her that the following stanzas, which now gushed upon her ear, were breathed from the lips of the too fascinating Spaniard:—

SERENADE.

Oh! thou art beauty's child, my love,
Young Beauty's playful child,
Heaven on thy birth hath smiled, my love
My heart for thee is wild, my love,
Oh! thou art Beauty's child.

Oh! thou hast dark blue-eyes, my love,
Soft, eloquent blue eyes,
The light that in them lies, my love,
Is autumn's evening skies, my love,
Oh, thou hast dark blue eyes.

Oh, thou hast raven hair, my love,
Long black and flowing hair.
Whilst o'er thy bosom fair, my love,
It falls, Love nestles there, my love—
Oh! thou hast raven hair.

Oh! thou hast teeth so white, my love,
Sweet laughing teeth snow-white;
The meteor of the night, my love,
Whilst falling 's not more bright, my love—
Oh! thou hast teeth so white.

Oh! thou hast winged feet, my love,
Small, light, and silvery feet;
In friendship ever fleet, my love,
But when thy love thou'dst meet, my love,
Oh! thou hast winged feet.

Oh! would thou wast mine own, my love,
Heart, soul, and lip, mine own!
Life, wanting thee, is lone, my love,
For like thee there are none, my love—
Oh! would thou wert mine own!

* Continued from p. 331.

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She listened with eager interest to his rich mellow voice, utterly unconscious of the running *bass* accompaniment of Macgregor's nose. Breathless she pressed her hands upon her bosom, and tried to still its wild pulsation, whilst tears strayed unheeded down her cheeks. Involuntarily she stretched forth her arms, unconscious that she stood alone. She had forgotten the world—all! but when the last tone of the music had died away, and all was again silent, a sob, a heart-rending sob, spoke the reaction of memory, and, shuddering, she sank upon her knees. Her clasped hands were raised to heaven, though she ventured not to lift her eyes from the earth—a prayer trembled upon her lip. The veil was rent from her struggling heart, and she felt herself a wretch, for it was now too plain that she, a wife, had dared to love, idolatrously to love, a stranger.

It was the first time that Sophia had known the horrors of self-condemnation, and many a vow did she make steadily to shun the society of one so dangerous to her peace. But although she meditated that which was right, she well knew that her purpose could not be easily effected, because, apart from the pleadings of her own heart, and the Spaniard's ever-ready attention, she was aware that any marked change of manner would draw remarks either from her husband or others which could not but prove highly embarrassing. And her determination was destined to be put to a speedy trial; for, scarcely had she entered the drawing-room the following morning, before a party of officers made their appearance, his excellency of Seville along with them.

Passing him hastily, and without notice, she turned to receive the apologies of Major Hindsley, who was no sooner assured of forgiveness for their exploit, than he proceeded to banter Macgregor on Sophia's causeless alarm. The colonel turned on his wife a scowling frown, and muttered something about affectation. Her pale cheek reddened with vexation, and her eyes sparkled fire, while Mrs. St. Clair maliciously observed, that 'Colonel Macgregor must feel highly flattered in possessing so *exclusive* an interest in the affections of his wife.'

'The dignified love of *some* women, madam,' said he, bowing to the lady 'is indeed flattering, that of *others* serves but to render a man ridiculous.'

Sophia turned upon him a look of surprise—it was the first time that the colonel had committed himself in the presence of others. For a moment her better feelings struggled, then a smile of scorn curled her lip, and, drawing herself proudly to her full height, she turned one haughty look upon the colonel, and approached Don Pedro, who leant gravely against the window, and extended her hand towards him, which he appeared to accept as a mark of peculiar favour, and, after a few moments, he was seen darting from the apartment.

'Whither in such haste, whither, I pray, your excellency?' said Mrs. St. Clair.

'Mrs. Macgregor has consented to try the efficacy of the sea-breeze for her headache;—perhaps you will honour my felucca with your presence?' said the don.

'Certainly, most gracious don,' replied Mrs. St. Clair, whose spirits seemed to have reached the utmost point of vivacity. 'But this is astonishing, absolutely wonderful!'

'What is wonderful, madam?' inquired Sophia, proudly, as his excellency left the room.

'Your consenting to a request of that most puissant don.'

'And why, madam?'

'Why, child? Because you are such a young prude.'

'It is better to be that than an old coquette,' retorted Sophia, sarcastically.

'All in good time, child,' added the hostess, provokingly; 'she who is in youth the former is generally the latter in age.'

'*Experientia docet*,' rejoined the guest.

Mrs. St. Clair doubtless felt the point, but she concealed her anger, merely remarking, in an equivocal tone, that she never before saw Don Pedro approach Sophia without her seeming ready to cry out, 'Oh! hubby, hubby, take the naughty man away!'

My introduction,' said the colonel, sullenly, 'might secure him from impoliteness.'

'I cannot conceive the reason of Mrs. Macgregor's *dis*like,' persecuted Mrs. St. Clair.

'I plead not guilty to your charge,' retorted Sophia, 'and I assure you that I am as conscious of his excellency's merits as even Mrs. St. Clair.'

As she turned, the Spaniard was by her side, and Mrs. Sinclair burst into a loud laugh, that had something more sardonic than mirthful in its sound.

'Upon my word I believe her,' whispered Major Hindsley to his companion, Captain Brown.

'And not without some apology,' said Brown, 'for how can she help "looking upon this picture and upon that?"'

'"Hyperion to a satyr,"' whispered the Major.

Meanwhile Don Pedro had grown so exhilarated that his gaiety became contagious, and Sophia found it impossible to resist the influence of the hour. So day followed day, diversion succeeding diversion.

It was vain for my friend to avoid the society of one so sedulously thrown into her way by the blind agency of her husband. He, indeed, was too much occupied by his own affairs to render that attention to his wife which her position so peculiarly required. To do him justice, the danger of her intercourse with the Spaniard never entered his head. Perhaps he thought too highly of himself, perhaps too highly of Sophia. He had, however, in the meantime, transferred his wavering admiration to Mrs. St. Clair, whose ready wit and independent manners suited his own aristocratic notions, and whose endurance of his attention arose partly from the pure spirit of mischief, partly from coquetry, and lastly from the ready supplies his well-stocked purse afforded to her somewhat scanty resources—supplies which her address in all games of chance or skill enabled her to transfer from the possession of her easy dupe. His gambling propensity, which, since his marriage, had lain dormant, now became fearfully developed to the amazed Sophia, who secretly mourned over the mutual errors of herself and her husband. He, too infatuated to perceive the perils which encompassed him, and flattered by Mrs. St. Clair's supposed preference, became daily more anxious to prolong the visit.

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Not so Sophia; she had painfully learned her danger, and many an anxious hour did she devote to the examination of her heart—a task more necessary since our departure was still constantly deferred. Sometimes she would remain whole evenings in her chamber, where vainly she tried to read or write—her thoughts were vagrant.

In such a mood, Sophia had declined joining a party to a ball given by Mrs. Holland, of the engineers, when the colonel, armed *cap-à-pie* for conquest, entered her dressing-room, and, greatly to his consternation, found that it was not her intention to accompany him, and, perceiving her in tears, inquired the cause: she muttered something about being ill, and dashed them away.

'Ill!' said he. 'How is it possible that a person so admired can be ill? I am never ill. Besides, it was my intention that you should have caused a sensation; but you always thwart my wishes, and impose upon my good-nature—instance your conduct to his excellency Don Pedro Valdigo, madam.'

'To Don Pedro Valdigo! How?' tremulously inquired Sophia, a bright suffusion overspreading her cheek.

'How, madam?' pursued the enraged little colonel. 'Is it not notorious to the whole garrison that your behaviour is most indecorous?'

Sophia trembled violently, and covered her face with her hands.

'Yes, madam, well may you be overwhelmed with confusion.'

'Confusion,' she echoed, vainly endeavouring to compose herself. 'Colonel Macgregor, really I don't comprehend.'

'Then, madam, in one word, I consider it indecorous for my wife to treat a man of Don Pedro's station in the slighting manner which you affect.'

Sophia breathed again.

'I insist upon knowing the reason that you so scornfully decline the attentions that his excellency offers in consideration of my introduction. Mrs. St. Clair asserts that it arises from my jealousy and secret lectures; therefore I request, nay command, that you will free me from such a barbarous aspersion.'

'Colonel Macgregor,' said Sophia firmly, yet calmly, 'I am not ignorant of the mercenary arts to which your fatal love for play has rendered you a ready victim. I think and hope, however, that your attentions to the wife of your general are no more than courteous. That lady's views regarding me, I fear, are dangerous and malicious. She calls me a prude, others think me a coquette. You think that I only exist in the breath of adulation or glare of society, and I would have the world think so; yet, believe me, that you are all mistaken; still, colonel, you trust largely to my honour; suffer me also to exercise discretion, and be assured that you shall never find me capable of abusing your confidence.'

It was some time before he could find courage to break the awkward silence that succeeded, but at length in a somewhat timid tone he ventured to entreat that she would oblige him by joining the party, having promised her hand for the evening to Don Pedro, 'however disagreeable.'

'Disagreeable!' sighed Sophia, with an impatient gesture, as she paced the room.

'It is no use denying it to me, Sophia—I see you really hate his excellency.'

She stopped short, and looked fully in his face, for it was evident that he meant literally as he had expressed himself; and she felt as if she were acting a despicable deceit, yet she hesitated; her colour went and came, whilst the confession of her heart's secret trembled on her lip; her eyes were fixed anxiously upon him, seeking but a word, a look of kind encouragement to support her in a frank avowal.

He kissed her hand, begging she would gratify his pride and redeem her promise. The action was gallant, but not affectionate. The tone of his voice was the most utter commonplace, and chilled the resolution which the warmth of his feelings had for a moment excited; therefore, changing her intention, she demanded if her present compliance would insure her future freedom of action? The colonel promised that it should. 'Then, sir,' said she, 'you shall be obeyed.'

'A thousand thanks,' said the gallant husband, and kissing her hand, after many injunctions as to her toilette, he departed.

Never had Sophia dressed with such care, never had she been less satisfied with her appearance, yet perhaps never with less cause. 'This one more indulgence,' said she, 'and then I will devote myself to self-restraint; Macgregor loves me not, but I will be true to his honour and my own.'

'I fulfil my promise,' said the colonel, as he placed the hand of his wife in that of Don Pedro.

'Yes,' added she, 'I am bound to obey my liege lord; so here I am, despite headache, nerves, etcetera.'

'But colonel,' asked the Spaniard, 'has Mrs. Macgregor further honoured me by complying with my other request?'

'No,' said the colonel, 'for that I must refer you to herself,' as he hurried away.

'May I inquire what that refers to?' asked Sophia.

'That you would visit me at Seville, donna.'

Sophia started.

'Mrs. St. Clair and the general have promised; the colonel, too, accepts my invitation. I venture, therefore, to hope that I shall not be denied where I could least endure disappointment.'

Sophia resolutely averted her eyes, as in a low voice she answered, 'It is impossible; I cannot visit Seville.'

'You are not serious, donna?'

'Most serious, your excellency; let us join the dance.'

The Spaniard coldly bowed an acquiescence.

Sophia saw that his feelings were wounded, but affected not to perceive the change in his demeanour, and endeavoured to draw him into cheerful conversation; but receiving no response beyond monosyllabic replies, she in turn began to feel depressed, when observing the eyes of Patrisinia Vialli anxiously fixed upon her, she determined to seize that opportunity to secure Don Pedro's interest for the lovers, believing that at this critical juncture no undue hopes could be founded 'on his part' by her interference, and trusting that such proof of the conviction of his magnanimity might contribute to soothe his wounded pride. With a tremulous voice she

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therefore intimated a wish to stroll through the illuminated garden, having a request to make that required privacy.

Pleased and surprised, her companion instantly conducted her from the ball-room.

'The fact is,' said Sophia, struggling to conceal her timidity under an appearance of gaiety, 'that your excellency possesses a secret which was only intended for me, and unfortunately you are the last person to whom that secret should have been revealed.'

'I will not affect to misunderstand that you allude to Patrisinia,' said he gravely.

'You have the power of destroying her dream of happiness—will you be so cruel?'

'And wherefore should Mrs. Macgregor feel interested in the question?'

'Patrisinia is my friend,' said Sophia, with naiveté.

'She was my friend also, donna; betrothed to me before she knew that Captain Westron was in existence.'

'Of which I was not aware until pledged to promote their views,' replied Sophia.

'And suppose I love Patrisinia?' archly inquired his excellency.

Sophia coloured deeply, and spite of all her heroism a pang shot through her heart, whilst she faltered, 'I thought—I was told—it is believed that you do not love Patrisinia.'

'I swear that I do not,' he impetuously exclaimed, clasping the hand of his companion. 'No, donna, well do you know that I do not love her.'

'Then promise you will not betray her.'

Don Pedro hesitated.

'Think of those who must be innocently involved. Think of the wretchedness to which you would doom two persons tenderly devoted.'

'It is indeed most sad to part from those we love,' said the Spaniard, as Sophia shrank from the meaning of his eyes. 'But in my official station,' he continued, as if recollecting himself, 'I am so connected, that passiveness becomes a breach of duty. Let Patrisinia forget the captain, and from my claims she is freed.'

'How,' pleaded Sophia, 'can you expect her to forget the being whom she fondly loves, by whom she is beloved?'

'There is but one invocation,' said Don Pedro, 'that can move me, and that you have omitted.'

'For—for the sake, then, of her whom you love,' faltered the petitioner.

Pressing her hand to his lips, he passionately exclaimed, 'Yes, for your sake, donna; for your sake, I promise.'

'A thousand, thousand thanks; let me hasten to my friend with the joyful tidings.'

'Not so,' said the Spaniard; 'I commit a breach of duty at your intercession, but that is a secret which must be confided only to your keeping. Pursue your plans cautiously, and let the lovers beware of Patrisinia's kinsmen; there are those amongst them that the tears of beauty could not soften, nor the power of love influence; and now that I have given so strong a proof of my submission, do not refuse me the pleasure of being near you. Why of late have I been avoided? How have I offended?'

Sophia was silent.

'At least pronounce my fault, that I may endeavour its expiation.'

'Your excellency has not committed one. Let us go; we shall miss the waltz.'

''Tis ever thus, signora; but I must be heard. In three days you leave Ceuta, and I return to Seville, to be more wretched than language can express, unless you accompany Colonel Macgregor thither.'

'It cannot be—speak of it no more.'

'The colonel has promised.'

Sophia raised her eyes reproachfully, and asked, 'Is your request a generous one, Don Pedro?'

His eyes sank beneath her scrutiny. 'Can you blame a wretch for seeking happiness?'

'I blame all who would betray confidence.'

'Do not think so meanly of me, signora.'

'Do not injustice to your own honour, Don Pedro.'

'How, donna, have I incurred your contempt?'

'By believing it possible that I could deserve yours.'

'Is it too much for a captive to pray for the sun to shine when its rays may cheer his heart, yet lose none of its own brilliancy?'

'Don Pedro, I am an Englishwoman, and perchance my notions on these points may differ from yours. Convinced, however, that you would not intentionally offend my principles, I am willing to believe that your words mean no more than common gallantry. Let us return to the company.'

Sophia moved on, but the Spaniard took care that it should not be towards the house.

'I would not breathe a thought,' said he, 'to sully your purity, a wish that angels might not register. Tell me but that you forgive—that you will remember me with pity—and I will live upon the recollection.'

'You shall have my kindest thoughts, but you must not forget that I am a wife.'

'Of one who values not the gem he possesses.'

'It matters not, he is my husband still.'

'And can you love a gambler and a sot?'

'I must abide my destiny.'

'So lovely, yet so cold!'

Sophia could not repress a sigh, for her heart told her that her lips were traitors to its anguish.

'But one word more,' said Don Pedro; 'were you free?'

A sigh quivered on her lip as she looked to heaven. Their eyes met as if in fascination for a single instant, and Don Pedro questioned no more.

'Well, Mrs. Macgregor, I begin to have some hopes of you,' said Mrs. St. Clair, as she met the strollers re-entering the ball-room.

'Why so, madam?' inquired Sophia.

'Because you have transgressed your code so far as to have indulged in a *tête-à-tête* of a full hour.'

'It appeared only five minutes,' said Sophia ingenuously.

'Better and better; then his excellency, I suppose, has prevailed with you to join our party to Seville?'

'In that, I regret to say that I have failed,' said the Don.

'Insufferable chit,' thought the lady; 'then no

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more winnings from the colonel; so heigho for a new favourite!' and she kept her word, for when the colonel left Ceuta he found that his temporary distinction had been purchased by the sacrifice of a serious sum in hard doubloons, and before he had been absent a week, Mrs. St. Clair had transferred her smiles to Captain Dashwood, the most heartless libertine in our regiment.

During the remainder of our visit Sophia rushed eagerly into dissipation, and few who gazed upon her sparkling smile, or listened to her joyous laugh, could have believed that the cankerworm was gnawing at her heart; yet so it was. Still she was more admired than ever, and never had been so much envied. She rode her spirited charger up the rugged ascent that led to the citadel with a fearless grace that excited the wondering applause of the Spanish ladies, who, ensconced in their curiously cushioned pillions, timidly suffered their muleteers to guide them in the track of the heroine.

Preparations for our departure were at length making, amongst which those for the smuggling of the lovers formed the most onerous part, it being as requisite to conceal Captain Westron as Patrisinia, lest his presence might induce a scrutiny too rigorous to escape detection.

There was not an English vessel in the port, and the harbour was guarded by Spanish sentinels, who, however inert upon other occasions, were generally watchful enough of all English movements; while, as if to increase the difficulties of our undertaking, the colonel, in utter ignorance of the affair, had accepted for our party a passage in the Spanish governor's felucca, who, being about to visit Algesiras, proposed that, after landing him there, his vessel should take us to Gibraltar. Several hogsheads of accoutrements had been placed in the hall, destined to be shipped under Colonel Macgregor's orders, and it was thought not impossible to conceal our adventurers in them; but to effect this object the colonel's concurrence became indispensable, who, greatly to his consternation, learned for the first time our perilous design; he was, however, too gallant as well as good-natured to refuse, as he said, 'a petition from the Graces,' and agreed to place himself for the nonce under petticoat government.

The vessel was to sail at day-break, and a splendid parting entertainment at the government-house was to terminate our visit. From this we arranged that Patrisinia should retire early, on the plea of indisposition, and having amused her duenna, and enacted a little domestic farce, she was secretly to leave her home, and, while dark, to join Sophia in her dressing-room, when the lovers were to be separately secured in hogsheads pierced with holes, and thence to be shipped on board the vessel as military stores.

Perhaps the intense anxiety respecting the morning's events was to Sophia a fortunate circumstance. It diverted her mind in some degree from the contemplation of Don Pedro's misery; yet the paleness that overspread his noble features, the calm abstracted air which he had worn ever since his passionate declaration, the quivering motion of his lips as mournfully he gazed upon her, the tremulous touch of his hand, as he led her for the last time to join a circle of dancers, whose gaiety seemed but mockery—all appealed but too powerfully to her sympathy.

Sophia took advantage of the confusion after supper to retire with the colonel, and with many injunctions to the tearful Patrisinia, and many earnest aspirations for success in their perilous enterprise she saw the captives securely packed in their respective hogsheads; and scarcely was all completed, when a party of soldiers entered to carry them to the ship, and, with reiterated injunctions to be careful in their transport, Macgregor marched them to the port.

The final moment was now come and Don Pedro advanced with an air that forbade denial, had denial been intended, but in truth it was not; so after many embraces from our Spanish friends, and after many lip-deep professions from Mrs. St. Clair and others, we took leave of our Ceuta friends, leaving none with more regret than the amiable gobernordora, and the homely but kind-hearted Mrs. Douglass, the former of whom, we had reason to believe, was not entirely ignorant of our plot. After our adieux had been completed, Sophia gave her hand to Don Pedro, who having placed it in his arm, proceeded to the pier, whither the governor and his suite had already gone. Conversation on the way was wholly suspended, for their hearts were too full. But when he handed her to the boat, he significantly bade her not to fear the dangers of her voyage.

At this moment one of the sacred casks that was being hoisted into the felucca struck against her side, the hook slipped, the cask tottered, Sophia half shrieked, and would have started from her seat had not Don Pedro held her firmly down. The men had caught the reeling cask in their arms, and guided it safely on deck. The governor and his officers were otherwise too busily engaged to notice Sophia's agitation, but it served to inform Don Pedro as to the manner in which Patrisinia had escaped.

'Calm your agitation,' he whispered, 'I will watch over you.' A glance alone answered, and Sophia stood trembling on the deck, her hand resting on the cask that contained Patrisinia. Macgregor, in seeming carelessness, leant on that which concealed Westron.

The little anchor was soon weighed, the pointed sails of our felucca were rapidly spread out to the favouring breeze, the vessel shot a-head, and Don Pedro, who stood silently watching the preparations of the sailors, now started forward, bowed courteously to the gentlemen, and grasping Sophia's hand with a fervent pressure, sprang without a word into the boat which awaited him alongside.

Sophia watched till it touched the pier, and when she saw him bound on shore, and stride rapidly towards the town, she stirred not until his stately figure was no longer discernible, and then, unable to repress her tears, she allowed me to hurry her to the cabin which had been prepared for our reception.

She still wept when the sound of a gun from the citadel broke the silence of the morning. The next moment the course of our vessel altered, and in another, obedient to the signal, she lay like a log upon the water.

Patrisinia was already missed—we were suspected—pursued, and about to undergo a scrutinizing search—a few moments would decide the fate of the culprits. Our hearts beat so violently that we could hear their pulsation, yet we feared

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to go on deck, lest our agitation should betray us. The silence of expectation reigned above; we tried to look towards the town, but the vessel had swung round, or was returning to it, for we could only see the mountains and the white aqueduct of Algesiras; presently there was a slight shock, and a low grating sound, as of a boat grazing the side of our vessel. Then we plainly felt the heeling of the light felucca as she yielded beneath the sudden boarding of several persons at the same moment. Then came the tramp of many feet, and a confusion of voices, and as the steps approached nearer, Sophia, conscious of her incapability to conceal her terrors, and the danger that awaited her betrayal, flung herself on the couch, and, burying her head in the clothes, feigned sleep. We heard the voice of the governor expostulating, 'Impossible! Signor Vialli,' said he, 'I tell you it is impossible! The signoretta cannot be on board without my knowledge. There is no one here but Colonel Macgregor's party, and I request that you will not distress the ladies.'

'Pardon me, governor—I am convinced that she is here,' said a voice that we recognized as Patrisinia's brother, a man of overbearing temper and repulsive manners. Westron is likewise missing, and there is no other place of concealment;' and the young cavalier impatiently flung open the cabin door. We both started up as he threw a searching glance around, muttered something between an apology and threat, and retired.

Greatly excited, we both rushed on deck, which we found crowded with priests and civilians, many of whom were recognized as members of the Vialli family; a weight, however, was removed from our breasts when we beheld Don Pedro leaning in a lounging attitude upon the cask in which Patrisinia was deposited, and the colonel still stationed upon that tenanted by Westron—a look from the former re-assured us.

'Well, signor,' said the governor to young Vialli, as he returned from searching the hold, 'you have examined every part of our vessel, and must be satisfied that your sister is not here; therefore I have to request that you may not interrupt our voyage.'

'I must first see the contents of these casks,' said Vialli, bending an eye of suspicion on Sophia.

'These casks, signor,' said Macgregor,' contain property belonging to his majesty, my master, and it is my duty to preserve them untouched. Should you so far forget yourself as to demand their inspection—'

'I know my duty, colonel, as well as you,' said the other doggedly, 'and I am determined to have them opened before I quit the vessel.'

'Then, signor,' said the irritated Scot, 'it must be by passing over my body.'

'Tut, tut,' interposed Don Pedro, 'Signor Vialli does but jest. He is not so unwise as to waste time in tumbling out a parcel of soldier's belts, caps, and jackets, when he should be galloping into Barbary. 'Tis plain that the signoretta is not here, and far more probable that she has passed the Moorish lines by this time;' adding, with an admonitory glance to the governor, 'Colonel Macgregor is a guest here, and we are bound to protect him and his.'

The haughty nonchalance with which he looked around forbade reply, and the party slowly descended into the boats, the reverend fathers growling hints about excommunication and the inquisition; not, however, before Don Pedro coldly intimated his intention to accompany the voyagers to Gibraltar.

'We are all greatly indebted to your excellency's interference,' said Sophia, as they walked apart.

'I am overpaid by the acknowledgment,' he replied, 'nor shall I leave you until you are beyond the possibility of danger. Should we ever again meet, dearest donna, I trust that I shall have learned to think more calmly, or that it will be under happier auspices.'

Sophia could not speak, and the Spaniard continued, 'Should you ever need a friend, signora, deign to remember that you have a sincere and disinterested one in Pedro Valdigo.'

'O, fear not,' said Sophia; 'I cannot, if I would, forget you.'

'Thanks, lady! and think not I will presume upon that assurance: but it is—it must be a sweet consolation in my lonely exile. This breeze will soon bear us across, and then, most excellent, most dear, a long, long farewell!'

Sophia turned to conceal the vagrant tears that started to her eyes.

After a pleasant sail, a boat with its crimson silk awning and gay rowers emerged from behind the pier of Algesiras, and shot alongside in order to take our hospitable host and suite on shore, after which we rapidly neared our homes.

It was a lovely morning; the dense cloud that rested half way down the rock became every moment less opaque, and finally rolling back, displayed the majestic summit of Gibraltar, with its signal-tower peering on its topmost height. Below lay the town, with its many-coloured buildings, and green vines mingling their vivid decorations. On the left frowned the ruins of the Moorish castle, and to the right the south pavilions, dazzling in the morning sun. Everywhere batteries, cannons, and shot, with all the appliances of war—emblems of destruction—sleeping on the bosom of peace. Then came the martial music from the grand parade, and presently might be seen troops of soldiers dispersing towards every avenue to relieve the wearied guards, who anxiously waited for them and their breakfasts.

Our felucca ran beneath the ports of the San Juan, the old seventy-four, which lay as a depôt-ship in the harbour of the New Mole. The accommodation chair was lowered, and we ascended. A conference for a few minutes took place between the colonel and the first-lieutenant, who, laughing heartily, ordered that two particular casks, marked, 'This end up,' should be instantly brought to the state cabin.

The chaplain was summoned, Patrisinia and her lover were released from their imprisonment, and were for ever united in the bonds of marriage ere they had well recovered from their surprise on finding their wedding honoured by the presence of his excellency Don Pedro.

''Tis enough for you,' said he to Patrisinia's inquiry, 'that your safety is secured.'

'You have preserved us all from the inquisition,' said the colonel. 'Egad, my teeth chatter

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at the thought; so pray, Mrs. Macgregor, unless you have a design on my life, never again play the confidante in a Spanish elopement.'

'Westron, I give you joy,' said Don Pedro; 'be kind to your wife. Gentlemen, farewell! Patrisinia, sometimes speak of me to those you love;' and he glanced at Sophia, which the penetrating Spanish girl was not slow to understand. 'May you always continue friends, and in your happiness remember that at Seville there lives one who can never forget you.' He pressed their united hands to his lips, and when they looked up he was gone.

Mrs. Westron entered British society under the powerful auspices of her colonel's wife, and Sophia found in the sympathies of friendship a constant consolation under the afflictions in which her union with an ancient libertine subsequently involved her. Too late she had learned the capabilities of her own heart, and although her principles had enabled her to sustain the trial, she never ceased to lament her involuntary error. The reflection made her lenient to the failings of her husband, and she bore with magnanimity the vices of the man whom she had sworn to obey, but could not honour.

It may be expected that I should now wind up my story by dealing poetic justice to my heroines, and tell how Patrisinia's happy love refuted Sophia's arguments against a marriage founded on enthusiasm; but, unfortunately for such a purpose, mine is a tale of real life, and truth compels me to confess that our Spanish friend's experience only too faithfully substantiated the justice of Sophia's lecture. She was not, however, destined to undergo all the ordeals of wedded life, for little more than a year had elapsed when she stood by the side of him for whose sake she had peilled so much—a grief-stricken widow; soon after which she bade adieu to her English friends, and returning to Ceuta, after due penance done, was again received into the bosom of her mother-church.

From that hour our friendship became a tale of the past; for, however satisfactory might be the English gold and widow's pension, which her marriage with poor Westron had secured, her reverend uncle found no inclination to permit further intercourse with heretics, whose acquaintance might lead to a second marriage in the corps.

Sophia was destined to a much more eventful life, but she and the Governor of Seville never met again; yet both survived their protracted separation, nay more, they survived their passion, and lived to form new ties and new affections, so true it is that the object which constitutes our happiness of to-day seems like a fading dream when reason wakes upon the morrow. It is only when we yield without a struggle that passion conquers. It is subdued to be our slave, once we determine that principle shall be victorious. Would that we could always imitate the discretion of Sophia, and so vanquish the foe that smiles but to deceive! But alas for poor human nature!

IMPROMPTU TO MRS. "SAVAGE," ON THE AUTHOR MISTAKING HER NAME.

Delighted with the charms that beam
From your sweet face, that hearts must ravage,
How could I, gentle lady, deem
That you were, for one moment, Savage?

But since, in mock'ry you must be
Known by a word *once* so alarming;
Henceforth that word shall bring to me
A sense of all that's soft and charming.

Savage and you are not the same,
Although in that disguise you're seen in;—
Or you *must get another name*,
Or *Savage* get another meaning!

E. H.

AUTO-BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES.

BY MRS. CRAWFORD.

Connected indirectly with the history of the unfortunate Thomas Drummond, and his claim to the earldom and estates of Perth, a very interesting paper appeared in the Metropolitan Magazine for February, 1832, from the admirable pen of the Ettrick Shepherd. I remember well to have read that paper at the time with the highest interest, and I have since referred to it with renewed delight. The story is written, as were all those which emanated from that son of genius, in a style at once natural, felicitous, and life-like; and the bearing which it has on the untoward destiny of Drummond, of whom and his claims I then knew nothing, has, of course, added largely to the interest with which I first perused it.

It is called 'A Tale of an Old Highlander,' and it refers more particularly to a contest, which arose at the time the various forfeited lands were about to be regranted by the crown to the heirs of the original owners, between a Mr. John Drummond, a gentleman born in France, and claiming to be lineally descended from the fourth Earl of Perth, grandfather of him of Culloden, and Captain James Drummond, who was only collaterally related, being a descendant of his younger brother, the first Earl of Melford, but who, on the supposition of the total extinction of the elder branch, succeeded in carrying off the grand prize of the Perth estates, and was some years afterwards, as I before narrated, raised to the peerage, though by the inferior title of Baron Perth. I have been greatly surprised and pleased with the general accuracy with which the Shepherd relates such of the circumstances as I am now enabled to compare with those facts and proofs which have since come to my own knowledge. Indeed, I have noticed no more than one single error, which is in the degree of propinquity in which Mr. John Drummond stood to the ancient house of Perth, the narrator supposing that Lord Edward Drummond, his father, was uncle of James, the first duke, whereas he was uncle (of the half blood) of James, the third duke, the un-

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fortunate exile of Biddick, and son of the first duke, by his third wife, the Lady Mary Gordon. But even this variation cannot properly be called an error, because the narrator expressly says, 'I cannot be sure that I recollect exactly the relationship; but I think his father was uncle to James, the first Duke of Perth.' Now, when it is considered that the old Highlander related his story to the Ettrick Shepherd in the year 1789, upwards of forty years before it appeared in the 'Metropolitan,' it must at once be admitted, to the immortal honour of James Hogg, not only that it furnishes a striking instance of the marvellous retentiveness of his memory, but a still more pleasing proof of the full reliance which may be placed, on any and on every other occasion, on his narrations of facts. The only mistake he happened to commit furnishes to my mind an affecting proof, now that nobly-gifted individual slumbers in the grave, and recks not of either praise or blame, of that beautiful moral rectitude which formed a distinguishing feature of his upright and guileless character, and was inwoven in his very nature.

It appears from the old Highlander's statement, that Mr. John Drummond claimed to be the son of Lord Edward Drummond, by his wife, the Lady Elizabeth Middleton; while Captain James Drummond, of the Melfort or junior branch, being at that time in ignorance of the existence of the Duke of Perth's family at Biddick, had to prove the final extinction of that, the elder branch, in Lord Edward. He therefore asserted, and brought forward certain witnesses and letters to prove that Lord Edward's wife never had a child, and he ultimately succeeded in obtaining possession of the Perth estates, thus negativing the fact of his rival's legitimacy. Certain it is, according to the authentic information obtained at Biddick, that Captain Drummond's father, on the death of Lord Edward in 1760, was served and returned (according to the Scotch law) as his nearest heir male, and assumed the title of Earl of Perth. It is clear, however, that on the supposition that there was no issue, or no male issue of the duke himself, and that the claim of Mr. John Drummond, as the supposed son of Lord Edward, was wholly untenable; still Captain Drummond, who obtained the estates, was not the real heir. On this two-fold hypothesis, the right of Count Melfort, who, as I have mentioned in my former statement, called upon Mrs. Peters to obtain information respecting the family, was indisputably superior to that of Captain Drummond, because the count represented the elder branch of the Melfort line, which had been living in exile in France, from the period of the abdication of the second James.

Count Melfort himself was a Romish priest, and officiated some years ago at the chapel in Moorfields. At the time he came forward to establish his own claim to the Perth estates, about the year 1815, he presented a petition to the Houses of Parliament, which I have recently seen, and which contains some very curious statements as to the mode in which possession of the estates was gained by the supposed substitution of a Captain Drummond of the seventy-third regiment of Highlanders, for Captain Drummond of the forty-second, (who died at Lisbon in the year 1780, on his passage to the East Indies,)—the son of a Mr. Colin Drummond of Megginch for the son of Mr. James Drummond of Lundin—in a word, a living man for one who had been dead three or four years. I say supposed substitution; for although Count Melfort, in his petition to Parliament, relates some startling and singular circumstances respecting the successful claimant, and the mode of his transfer from the seventy-third to the forty-second Highlanders with a view to this scheme, yet I know nothing further on the point than what is stated in the petition, and it has of course no bearing whatever on the superior right of the Drummonds of Biddick. It was while Count Melfort was engaged in the prosecution of his claim that he paid the visit to Mrs. Peters before alluded to; and having then learned, for the first time, that the duke, her father, had left two sons, he appears at once to have abandoned his own case as hopeless, for no further proceeding was ever taken by him. Indeed, there is reason to believe from information obtained by Thomas Drummond, that the count then agreed to accept a pension of two hundred pounds a year for his life from the possessor of the Perth estates, which was paid at the family banker's, near Charing Cross. It was this, doubtless, to which the hostess of the little inn at Biddick alluded when she spoke to my friend of the allowance which the great lord made to a Frenchman, a popish priest. I read not many months ago an account in a newspaper of the death of Count Melfort* in France, at an advanced age.

With respect to the substitution alleged by Count Melfort to have taken place at the time the Perth estates were restored by the crown in 1785, it is extremely difficult to believe that a gallant officer, and one whom the old Highlander himself, in spite of his partiality for the rival claimant, (who had married his young and beautiful mistress, Barbara Stuart,) admitted to be 'an excellent man, a gentleman of high honour and integrity,' could possibly have lent himself to any such deception. It is true, that according

* As a proof that a knowledge existed in some quarter of the Duke of Perth's having lived in seclusion at Biddick, I may here mention a circumstance which I omitted in my former statement. At the time my friend visited Biddick, he was much surprised to see two fine vessels on the stocks, intended for the merchant service, this being at a point of the river Wear, several miles above Sunderland, and where formerly he had never seen anything larger than the flat-bottomed barges which convey the coals to the ships lying in the harbour. Having entered into conversation with the master builder, my friend learned that about twenty-five years previously a vessel of similar dimensions was built on the same spot by the person to whom his informant was then serving his apprenticeship, and that at that very time he was requested by a gentleman at Sunderland to take with him and distribute at Biddick a number of printed hand-bills which had been sent from London, requiring information as to any descendants of the Duke of Perth, who was understood to have settled, after the battle of Culloden, in that locality. It now appears probable that these hand-bills might have been published by Count Melfort at the time that he was engaged in asserting his supposed rights, and that the intelligence he thus obtained led to his visit to Mrs. Peters.

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to the Highlander's tale, as narrated by the Ettrick Shepherd, there would appear to have been a still stronger motive in operation than even the splendid prize of the Perth estates. Miss Barbara Stuart was the reigning beauty of the day; and such was the surpassing loveliness of her form and face, that there was hardly a 'young nobleman or gentleman in the (sister) kingdom who ever saw her that did not fall in love with her.' It was this dangerous gift of extreme beauty which, in the absence of some counter-vailing qualities of mind, proved to be her utter ruin, and led to that sad catastrophe on which the Shepherd's story mainly turns.

Miss Stuart resided at that time in Edinburgh with her aunt, Lady Livingston, with whom she was a great darling, and Boig, the old Highlander, was their domestic servant. She was unfortunately a young lady of a volatile and coquettish disposition, and flirted with many admirers, without intending to give serious encouragement to any. Captain Drummond, it seems, was her favoured suitor, until his regiment was removed from Edinburgh to the south of England. A Mr. John Lyon succeeded him, and was gallanting her about at the time that John Drummond arrived from France, on the rumour of the intended removal of the forfeitures incurred by the rebellion of 1745. Among other letters of introduction which he brought from several noble jacobite families in London, was one to Lady Livingston, in which he was named as the lineal heir to the great Perth estates.

The young Frenchman's heart was at once enthralled by the charms of the beautiful Barbara; and being 'all flattery, wit, and good-humour,' he soon contrived to make a suitable impression on the ambition of the old lady, and the affections of the young one. He plied his assiduities with so good effect, that the coquette herself was actually won, to the great delight of Lady Livingston, who had previously favoured the suit of Captain Drummond, but who, being influenced by the still higher pretensions of his rival, as the undoubted heir, now thought no more of the 'Highland cousin to the new wooer.'

It appears that Mr. Lyon did not tamely submit to abandon his own claims to the young lady. His proud spirit could not brook to be thus unceremoniously superseded, and he sought occasion to offer a personal insult to Mr. John Drummond, which led to a hostile meeting between them, at a place called Burntsfield Links,* near Edinburgh. They fought with rapiers, in the use of which each was an adept, and after contending for some time, during which Lyon declined the intervention of the Master of Rollo, one of the seconds, for a reconciliation, he was unhappily run through the body, and was carried home a corpse. This was the first sad fruit of the heartless, or at least thoughtless, flirtation of the beautiful coquette; but, unfortunately, the mischief did not end here.

The survivor in this fatal rencontre was put upon his trial, but was fully acquitted, and shortly afterwards he and his beloved Miss Stuart were united. Mean time, her original suitor, Captain Drummond, had been apprised of what was going on in Scotland, and how matters were likely to end with his betrothed and his cousin. He therefore obtained leave of absence, and posted to Edinburgh; but ere he arrived, the marriage had taken place. 'He had loved,' says the Ettrick Shepherd, 'with all the warmth of his noble nature, and was so much affected by Barbara's deceit and ingratitude, that he fell sick, and scarcely spoke or saw the light for nearly a month. But, perhaps, during a part of this time, he had been studying the most ample revenge, which he soon found the means of putting in practice. He conceived himself to have been exceedingly ill used, and without seeing either Barbara or the fortunate lover, he again posted to the regiment, and from thence to London.'

It was now that Captain Drummond brought forward his own claim to the Perth estates, in which, as has been already shown, he was as completely successful over his rival in law, as the other had been in the affair of love. Barbara had accompanied her husband to the continent, to endeavour to obtain the necessary evidence as to his birth and legitimacy, and their faithful domestic, Boig, went with them. "On reaching Calais, on their way home, Lady Perth (as she had been styled ever since her marriage) was left behind, being unable, from the state she was in, to proceed further, and Boig remained with her. She was there delivered of a son; but was so meanly lodged, and left so poor, that she was obliged to borrow from Boig till he had not a sixpence left. In this wretched state was the once celebrated beauty lying, when her husband, after long absence, returned to France, with the news that they were utterly ruined. He had failed to establish his supposed right, as the legitimate son of Lord Edward Drummond and Lady Elizabeth Middleton; and it certainly appears, from the statement of Thomas Drummond of Biddick, to have been an admitted fact, that Lord Edward left no children. However, John Drummond himself, being fully persuaded in his own mind that his right was superior to that of his opponent, and greatly irritated with his failure, published an article in one of the journals or periodicals of the day, accusing Captain Drummond of grievous malpractices against him, in tampering with witnesses in the course of the recent litigation. The captain upon this followed his relation to Calais, accompanied by Major M'Glashan, of the twenty-first regiment, and a challenge ensued.'

The final catastrophe of the old Highlander's story is so singular and interesting, and is so admirably told by the Ettrick Shepherd, that I cannot refrain from giving it, and in the narrator's own words.

'But the circumstance that rendered this tale so interesting to me at first, and impressed all the circumstances so strongly on my remem-

* At a short distance from the old town of Edinburgh, and to south-west of the Meadows, (the ornamental park of the Scotch metropolis,) lie the downs, called the Burntsfield Links, where the citizens in summer amuse themselves at the favourite Scottish game of Golf, and where the troops stationed in the city generally perform their exercises. A little further to the westward is the Borough Moor, where the gallant James IV. reviewed his brave army, (in which were many of the inhabitants of Edinburgh, with their chief magistrates at their head,) before he marched to the fatal field of Flodden.

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brance, is yet to narrate, for, without something a little tinged with the supernatural, a tale has few charms for me.

'Well, it so happened that one fine pleasant day, as Mr. John Drummond was walking by himself on Burntsfield Links at Edinburgh, near by the scene of the fatal rencounter with John Lyon, that gentleman came up to him alive and well, and asked him how he liked to be married. The other, struck with astonishment, made no answer, but stood and gazed at the querist, who, again accosting him, said, "You deprived me foully of my love and my life, Drummond, but I shall be even with you to-day, and the next time I meet with you I'll shoot you through here," touching his head with the point of his fore-finger, close above the right ear.

'The vision of course proved a dream, for instead of being walking on Burntefield Links he was lying in his own chamber in the Horsewynd, with his lovely Barbara in his arms; but the moment that the apparition touched him with its finger he sprang from his bed, and exclaimed that he was shot through the head. His lady started up in amazement, crying out, "How? Where? By whom?" "By that scoundrel Lyon," said he.

'It was eight o'clock in the morning, the sun was shining into the room, and when Barbara received this answer, she grew pale as death, thinking her husband was deranged.

'"It is true!" exclaimed he wildly; "I am—I am shot through the head, and my brains are blown out. Look, and satisfy yourself at the hole the bullet has made. Merciful Heaven! was I not on the Links naked?"

'"You are raving, Drummond!" cried she, weeping, and throwing her arms about him; "seized by some mortal frenzy, I fear. Compose yourself, and lie down; for you were out nowhere, but lying sound asleep with me."

'He got his head bound up, and lay down, trying to compose himself; but his ideal wound was so painful that he continued in an agony, until a letter was brought up stairs to him. It was that which stated to him the new claims of his rival on the Perth estate, and the strong doubts entertained of his own propinquity.

'This was a most galling business, and the anxiety of mind that it threw him into completely eradicated the vision and the wound from his head, nor did he ever think of them more until the same vision was repeated to him at Calais. He dreamed that he was walking on Burntsfield Links, and that Mr. Lyon came up to him, and asked him how he liked to be married. The dreamer still had no power to reply, while the other continued—"You deprived me foully of my love and my life, Drummond, and sent me, all unprepared, to my account. But I am even with you now, and am come to fulfill my promise. Be expeditious, and I will wait here till I take you with me."

'Drummond started up in a cold perspiration, with terror and astonishment; and, just as he was saying to his wife that he was going to die, and would never see the evening of that day, the door opened, and Boig handed him a note from Major M'Glashan. Notwithstanding this solemn and dreadful warning, Drummond refused to retract one item of what he had published and signed with his name, and the event was, that he fought with Lord Perth, and was shot through the head at the first fire, the ball entering immediately above the right ear, on the very spot which the apparition touched with its finger.

'The remainder of Barbara Stuart's history is too painful to relate. Poor Boig, who left her at last, having neither money nor clothes to come home with, often wept when speaking of her.* * Never was retaliation on a deceitful lover visited home with such an overpowering intensity.'

This was, indeed, a melancholy catastrophe for the brilliant but brief career of the beautiful Barbara Stuart, and it may furnish an instructive lesson both to young and old. It appears to have been in compliance with the urgent wish of her aunt, Lady Livingston, that Miss Stuart first gave encouragement to the addresses of Captain Drummond, and with the same sanction that she finally discarded both the captain and Mr. Lyon in favour of the new suitor, Mr. John Drummond, the supposed heir to the honours and estates of Perth. She had probably never fixed her affections, except upon the latter, who became her husband; but the course which she had thoughtlessly pursued with the other gentlemen occasioned the ruin and the death of the man she really loved. First it brought upon his head the guilt of Mr. Lyon's blood; and then, by a sad retribution, he lost his own life by the hand of her original lover. The governing motives of Lady Livingston seem to have been ambition and interest. It is, indeed, lamentable that parents, and those who have the charge of the young and beautiful, should so frequently attempt to build the fabric of their future happiness on such unstable foundations as these.

Miss Stuart, after her marriage, assumed by anticipation the title of Lady Perth, and it was then expected that her husband would shortly establish his right to the forfeited estates. How vain were these calculations! Captain Drummond, the discarded lover, obtained both the splendid prizes—first, the estates, and afterwards the title; and worse, far worse than all, deprived her husband of his life. Thus, without vice, but merely from presuming on the dangerous gift of beauty, and trifling with the feelings and affections of her admirers, was Barbara Stuart, in the height of her youth and loveliness, brought to utter ruin. She was deprived of the object of her affections by a violent death, and she was left in poverty and misery in a foreign land.

EPITAPH.

(This Epitaph is by Thomas Campbell, and was written on the death of Mrs. and the Misses Shute, by drowning, when on a party of pleasure.

In deep submission to the Will above,
Yet with no common cause for human tears;
This stone, for the lost partner of his love,
And for his children lost—a mourner rears.

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One fatal moment, one o'erwhelming doom
Tore threefold from his heart the ties of earth,
His Mary, Margaret, in their early bloom,
And her who gave them life and taught them worth.

Farewell, ye broken pillars of my fate,
My life's companion, and my two first-born!
Yet with this silent stone I consecrate
To conjugal paternal love forlorn.

Oh! may each passer-by the lesson learn,
Which can alone the bleeding heart sustain,
When Friendship weeps at Virtue's funeral urn—
That, to the pure in heart, to die is gain.

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THE

METROPOLITAN MAGAZINE.

JULY TO DECEMBER, 1841.

AMERICAN EDITION.

VOL. XII.

NEW YORK:
PUBLISHED BY JEMIMA M. MASON,
(LATE LEWER,)
CORNER OF BROADWAY AND PINE STREET.

1841.

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THE METROPOLITAN.

No. CXXIII.

JULY, 1841.

THE BLUE BELLES OF ENGLAND.*

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XVIII.

'THINGS THAT WE HAVE, WE PRIZE NOT AT THEIR WORTH.'— HOPE WITHOUT FEAR.

THE first, the last, the only subject discussed in the family of Mrs. Hartley, before they retired to rest that night, was the apparition of Mrs. Gardener Stewart in the drawing-room of Lady Dort, just when every one else was preparing to leave it, and apparently, nay evidently, for no other purpose than to be introduced to Constance Ridley. It was a subject which certainly possessed considerable interest for Constance herself; nevertheless, had she foreseen the mass of questioning which was to ensue from her mentioning this new acquaintance to Mrs. Hartley, together with the circumstances attending it, she would probably have thought all the information she could possibly get concerning the lady, dearly purchased by the necessity of submitting to such a lengthened cross-examination.

There is a blundering and self-tormenting propensity, by no means very uncommon even among those who ought to know better, which leads to the setting a very exaggerated value upon what is difficult of attainment, solely because it is so. Had Mrs. Gardener Stewart *not* pertinaciously avoided any visiting acquaintance with the Hartleys, it would never have entered their heads to consider her as a person of so much consequence as they now evidently did; for in fact, notwithstanding both her wealth and her elegance, her acquaintance never could have been of any great advantage or pleasure to them. The pre-eminently quiet love of her mansion, in which an earthquake would have been more welcome than a fiddle; the extreme smallness of her dinner-parties, and her shuddering abhorrence of all evening assemblings, would have rendered the boast of visiting her a very barren advantage to them. But as they could by no means obtain it, Mrs. Hartley did not scruple, at least in the bosom of her own family, to declare, that she would rather have the entrée at the house of Mrs. Gardener Stewart, than at any other in London.

It was for this reason that every little circumstance connected with this most unexpected introduction was drawn forth from the weary Constance, by such a lengthened series of interrogations as kept her standing with her bed-room candle in her hand for half-an-hour before her own door.

'Are you quite sure, my dear, that she had only arrived the moment before she spoke to you?'

'No, ma'am,' replied Constance, endeavouring to suppress a yawn, 'I am not sure of it at all — I do not think I said so, did I?'

'Most certainly you did, my dear. I am quite positive of having received that impression as we conversed on the subject during the drive home. What is it, Constance, which has led you to change your opinion on this point? I am quite sure you said so.'

'I beg your pardon, mamma — it was I

* Continued from vol. xi. p. 337.

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who said so, and not Constance. I heard Mrs. Gardener Stewart's name announced a minute or two before we saw her. Constance, I dare say, did not notice it, because the name was unknown to her,' said Penelope.

'Very well,' resumed Mrs. Hartley, 'that quite explains it. But now, my dear, do just tell me once more how it was all managed. You were walking with Mr. Mortimer, you say? Well, and then?'

And thus she continued, till Constance, greatly as she had admired the graceful stranger, would gladly have given up the honour she had received, rather than hear any more about it.

This, however, was not destined to be the case. The following day brought a note to Constance, the envelope of which contained Mrs. Gardener Stewart's visiting card. The note ran thus:

'Will you, my dear Miss Ridley, have the kindness to allow for all want of ceremony in an invalid who mixes very little in society, and that little only by the indulgence of friends who have the kindness not to exact from her observances which her state of health would render irksome? I will not, my fair young friend, at this moment, attempt to explain to you why it is that in your case I am tempted to make a greater exertion than is usual with me. The time, I think, will come when I shall have no such reserve. *En attendant*, then, will you grant me the pleasure of your company at dinner to-morrow at eight? Say yes, and my carriage shall attend you, lest any inconvenience should arise from your requiring that of your amiable friends at a moment that may interfere with engagements of their own. Should you, unhappily for me, have anything for to-morrow night, that you would not like to give up for the cloister-like quietness of my little drawing-room, the coachman shall attend your orders at any hour you will name.

'Believe me, my dear Miss Ridley,
'Very faithfully yours,
'AMIE ANNIE GARDENER STEWART.'
Grosvenor Place, Tuesday.

So very unexpected an invitation would, under any circumstances, have created some emotion in the mind of Constance; but now, after the immense importance she had heard given to every act and word of this mysterious Mrs. Gardener Stewart, she coloured violently, and placing the note in the hands of Mrs. Hartley, said, in a much more docile tone than usual, 'What do you think I ought to do, Mrs. Hartley?'

'Do?' exclaimed her hostess, looking at her with astonishment. 'What can you mean, my dear Constance? Certainly you cannot think of letting the Opera interfere with such an invitation as this?'

Now, to say truth, Constance had recollections connected with the Opera which would have led her to give up pretty nearly any invitation in the world, for the sake of certain hopes which she had connected with her intended re-appearance in her brother's box; but, for some reason or other, very vague, floating, and undefined, this invitation from Mrs. Gardener Stewart was felt to be an exception, and she therefore replied with exemplary politeness, 'I will certainly accept the invitation, Mrs. Hartley, if you think I had better do so.'

'Then, indeed, my dear, you will accept it instantly. I am sure you are not quite aware of the advantage which the notice of so very exclusive a person may be to you; and I consider it as a duty entrusted to me, and owing both to you and to myself, to point it out to you. Do I make myself understood?'

Constance returned no very decided answer to this often-repeated appeal; contenting herself by performing with prompt obedience the act required, and despatching a gratefully-worded acceptance of the honour offered her.

'There is a tide in the affairs of men,
Which taken at the flood leads on to—'

Heavens knows what—everything, it may be, that they most wish for and desire. So thought Mrs. Hartley, as she sat in her dressing-room, without even calling Margaretta to counsel, and meditated on the many singularly propitious circumstances of her present London campaign.

'I do believe,' thought she, 'that when I decide upon doing anything, I am pretty certain of success, especially when circumstances, which nobody can control, turn out as they have done this year, so very fortunately. In short, when things go right, I know how to make the most of them.'

And then she fell into a reverie of which Mr. Marsh was the hero, which ended by her muttering half aloud, 'Well! if such be his whim, I see not why I should disappoint him. As far as I am concerned in the matter, I have but one motive for doing what I am quite sure he speedily intends to ask,—and such a motive as neither gods nor men can quarrel with. I shall prefer, greatly prefer, having seven thousand a year to spend, instead of two,—so much for my motives; and as for his, I can read them quite as plainly. The young man is conscious that, notwithstanding his large fortune, good education, and so forth, he is not of first-rate *ton*

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in society, and it is impossible not to admire and respect the excellent tact which leads him to prefer my *savoir faire* to all the mere youth and beauty which he sees buzzing about him.'

Such was the state of Mrs. Hartley's mind at the time Mrs. Gardener Stewart's invitation to Constance afforded her so much pleasure. Her views of society, or rather of her place in it, were greatly enlarged since Sir James Ridley's wealthy friend had turned her thoughts towards a second marriage. Hitherto, notwithstanding her strong innate conviction of superior ability, her moderate means had compelled her to follow where nature, as she thought, had intended she should lead; but now, persuaded that fate and fortune were about to atone to her for all their former injustice, she deliberately set about sketching for herself a future, more worthy her ambition than even the most prosperous portion of the past had ever been.

Everything at this moment seemed to favour her. The progress of Margaretta with Sir James Ridley, though as yet he seemed himself most innocently unconscious of it, was too evident to be mistaken. The purse of his sister was an ever ready and most commodious resource, and the fashion into which she was rising, a ladder by which to climb precisely into the region where she herself soon hoped to follow her.

Notwithstanding all her cleverness, however, Mrs. Hartley had fallen into a very 'vulgar error' respecting Mrs. Gardener Stewart; really believing the rigid exclusiveness which made her acquaintance an object of such eager desire, would give way before the great accession of wealth which her expected marriage with Mr. Marsh was to bring with it, and fondly thinking that the *élégant's* lucky whim respecting Miss Ridley could not fail of opening a path for her own advances. But herein she did Mrs. Gardener Stewart egregious wrong. Diogenes was not less likely to be seduced into intimacy by a large fortune, than was this *bella ritrosa*. It is likely enough that she would have pined away and died, had she ceased to have a large fortune herself, for privation or difficulty of any kind would have been greatly beyond her power to bear. But as to knowing, or caring, anything about the fortunes of others, it never entered her head for a single instant. All she required from those she permitted to approach her, was that they should all contribute, more or less, to the gently pleasing excitement by which the daily routine of her elegant existence was rendered agreeable to her; and had she failed to obtain this, it is probable she would have contrived to procure *quantum suff.* of laudanum, skilfully mixed with orange-flower water, sugar, and cream, perhaps iced, and having taken it with a golden spoon, would have laid herself down amidst hyacinths and jonquils upon her soft silken sofa, the demi-jour admitted through her Venetian blinds rendered beautifully less by gauze curtains, and so have fallen asleep, without struggling longer with a life that did not suit her.

But of all this, the active-minded and ambitious Mrs. Hartley understood nothing, and, like many other people, laid her plots and plans in nice conformity to her own views of men and things, without dreaming that it was possible she could blunder in her estimate of others.

After a delightful half hour thus passed alone, in reviewing all the favourable circumstances by which she was surrounded, and complacently looking through the various vistas which her hopes had cut out for her, leading to fortune, fashion, and fame, she remembered that her career, though bright, could not be idle, that she had an immense deal of business to get through, and that the best way to begin it, would be sending for Margaretta.

'Eh bien, ma chère, vous voilá en route!' she gaily exclaimed, as the young lady entered in obedience to her summons, 'imagine that epitome of elegant impertinence, Mrs. Gardener Stewart, beginning to *cotton up* to us, at last!'

'To *us*, mamma?' returned the daughter with emphasis.

'Yes, Margaretta, to *us*, or what is, and will be so very nearly us, as to be precisely the same thing to all intents and purposes, as far as my wants and wishes respecting her are concerned.'

'I am glad you think so, mamma,' replied the young lady, yawning; 'but as far as *I* am concerned, I confess to you that in the first place I do not *now* care three straws about Mrs. Gardener Stewart; and in the second, that the only *cottoning*, as you call it, that I can value, must be shown to me, and not to any one else, however nearly connected.'

'Come, come, Margaret,' replied her mother, 'you positively must not Lady Ridley it yet. Take my word for it, darling, Sir James is by no means likely to be indifferent about whom you visit. He is as vain as a peacock, and has all the inclination in the world to be superlatively bon ton,—though I confess he does occasionally blunder a little in the way he sets about it.'

'Good gracious, mamma! Do you really suppose that if I succeed in getting this oaf of a man, I shall give myself any trouble about his likings and dislikings, concern-

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ing whom I shall visit? No such thing will enter into my speculations, I do assure you.'

'Silly girl! How can you suppose for an instant that I meant anything of the kind?' I should have thought you had known me better. What I mean is, that at the present moment, while he is yet wavering, I consider it as very important that he should conceive our set to be a very good one.'

'I am quite aware of that, *mamma mia*, and will make all possible use of it, depend upon it. As far as that goes, I will be all observance—and I suspect we shall do, even should Mrs. Gardener Stewart continue to look as if she were dreaming about the man in the moon, every time we happen to meet her.'

'It goes well still, then, does it, dearest? Do tell me, Margaret, if you do not think the disclosure will be a treason to the blind god, what was it he was whispering to you so closely yesterday evening?'

Margaret laughed. 'Upon my word, mamma, you must think me the most matchless daughter that ever mother had. What a question! Do you really insist upon my answering sincerely, and with no mental reservation whatever?'

'Yes, my dear, I do,' replied her mother, in the same tone.

'Well then! Look not at my blushes, I entreat you! He asked me if ever in my whole life I had seen such a clumsy turnout as Lord John Crosby showed off in the Park on Sunday!'

'Did he indeed?' returned Mrs. Hartley, in the same pleasant vein. 'And yet,' she added more seriously, 'and yet you begin to think that it will do?'

'Yes—I do begin to think so. You may remember what I told you before we left Laurel Hill, about the immense importance of opportunity; and, by-the-bye, mamma, I must say that you have managed that matter most beautifully. Depend upon it I was right—depend upon it there is not a girl in London, let her advantages be what they may, who could compete with me in this charming chase, as long as we can contrive to keep him so constantly near us. He comes to me as constantly, and as naturally, for my little compliments to himself, and my little jokes about all his acquaintance, as Cloe does to the footman to be fed; and you will see, mamma, that before long he will find out that he cannot do without them. Besides, I have another thing for me—very much for me, I am certain, though I confess to you I do not very well understand why it is so; but for some reason or other, his dear friend Mr. Marsh patronises me. He does indeed—I am quite serious, I assure you; for some reason or other, Mr. Marsh wishes me to become Lady Ridley, and I look upon him as no unimportant ally, I promise you.'

During the latter part of this speech Mrs. Hartley had occasion to get up, and look about the room for her handkerchief, or her smelling bottle, or something or other that she wanted, which prevented her making any direct answer to it; and when she returned to her place, she only said, 'So much the better, Margaret; in a business of so much importance no advantage should be overlooked. And now, dearest, I want your assistance in writing a multitude of invitations for me, and still more in the business of deciding who must, and who must not, be asked, for my first *positively* literary party. You will conceive readily enough, *ma chère*, without my telling you so, that I am beyond all things anxious that my first step in this new line should be equally decisive and brilliant. I did a good deal in the way of increasing my acquaintance among the set at Lady Dort's last party, and I have no doubt that I shall have abundant opportunity at Lady Stephens' next Thursday to swell my list of authors to any amount I choose—in fact, this was my only reason for accepting her abrupt invitation, for I fancy her set is terribly mixed.'

'O dreadfully!' returned Margaretta; 'so much so, mamma, that I strongly advise you to get rid of Sir James on that night if you can, for I see that he is excessively upon the *qui vive* to push himself by all ways and means into the first circles, which by-the-bye, is the only redeeming point about him; and he is quite sufficiently *au fait* to find out that the *omnium gatherum*, upon which Lady Stephens piques herself, is not quite bon ton.'

'I do not know how I can manage it, Margaret,' replied Mrs. Hartley. 'He will be sure to dine here, and it will be very difficult to shake him off, if he happens to have no other engagement.'

'Will you commission me to do it, mamma?' demanded the young lady with sudden animation.

'Yes, my dear, willingly. I know I may trust you, Margaret, and that you will take care not to chill him by anything which he might construe into your wishing him away.'

Margaretta smiled. 'Fear nothing, dear mamma, on that score,' she said; adding, a moment afterwards, 'I suppose you will not make any particular point of my going?'

'Do just as you please, Margaretta—I

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shall make Constance go—Mr. Mortimer's absurdly vehement admiration of her, which I hear of from everybody, has made her completely the fashion among a certain set, and that set no contemptible one, consisting of course of all his own adorers,—and Mr. Marsh may go if he will—it will be quite sufficient introduction to Lady Stephens to say that he dined here. Penelope, too, will go of course. The carriage will be full without you, my dear.'

Margaretta nodded her head, in token that she was well satisfied, but said no more on the subject; and she and her mother set actively to work upon the business before them, in the course of which Mrs. Hartley, feeling her courage augmented by the favouring accidents which had attended her introduction of Constance, ventured to announce her being at home on Wednesday next, to many whom heretofore she had not considered likely to profit by the information.

* * * *

It was not without some little agitation, and a considerable degree of uncertainty as to the pleasurable result of the hazardous adventure she was about to try, that Constance prepared herself for the arrival of Mrs. Gardener Stewart's carriage. It came punctually, and she was punctually ready for it; but ere it conveys her to Grosvenor Place, a few words must be said concerning what preceded her reception there.

At the very earliest hour *possible*, on the morning after Lady Dort's party, Mr. Mortimer presented himself before his indulgent friend, Mrs. Gardener Stewart, to pour out to her the gratitude with which her unexpected appearance the preceding night had inspired him.

'I have no words,' he said, 'to tell you what I felt at the moment I first beheld your exquisite figure approaching,

'Comme un jour doux, dans les yeux delicats'

I winked, and looked again, scarcely daring to believe my senses. Dearest, dearest Mrs. Gardener Stewart! how can I thank you?'

'I am sufficiently thanked, Mr. Mortimer, by perceiving that the effort I made to please a valued friend had been successful. I was repaid also by the extreme satisfaction I felt at seeing how very charming a creature your Miss Ridley is. I am delighted with her, Mortimer—she is precisely my *beau idéal* of what the beloved of a poet ought to be. She is a most lovely thing! Indeed she is!'

'Imagine what my feelings must be at hearing you say this! Do you not know that without it my heart could not permanently attach itself? Herein, I think, lies the essential difference between Meer and myself. We are both created with so vivid a perception of the beautiful in woman, as to render us—as I know too well—beings in some sort different, and apart from the ordinary race of men. But with him, beauty—exquisite, observe—but still merely beauty, is all that either himself, or his muse, requires. But it is otherwise with me, my charming friend; for not only must I have soul and intellect also, (or at any rate what appears such,) but I cannot love where that perfection of grace is wanting, which—which I have been accustomed to worship—HERE.'

There was a sort of tacit 'so far shalt thou go, and no farther,' in the bow with which this was received, that prevented Mr. Mortimer from permitting his gratitude to mix itself into any closer alliance with his love, and he fell back upon the delight he felt at having bestowed his affections upon one approved so cordially by Mrs. Gardener Stewart.

'She *is* cordially approved, Mr. Mortimer, most cordially,' replied the lady; 'and I am willing to give you the most incontestable proof of this, by inviting her to dine with me to-morrow. But you must be reasonable, my dear friend. Do not ask more than I can grant, and you will spare me the pain of disappointing you. Mortimer, it is impossible—nothing less than impossible—that I should have her to dine *tête-à-tête* with me. You know not what you ask. My health, always delicate, received a shock from the effort I made last night, which will require many nights and days of perfect peace to remedy. Nay, Mortimer, raise not your eyebrows at the phrase, as if you meant to say your gentle Constance was no enemy to peace. I know she is not—I see her sweet, thoughtful, classic face before me now, and I am ready to allow that there is a delicious calm about it, which it is luxury to look upon. But, O Mortimer! I cannot talk to any female mortal mixture of earth's mould for hours, nay, not for moments of unaided *tête-à-tête*. I have no strength, no fibre, no power to endure it. Let us not discuss the point, I implore you. Believe me sincere when I say that it is impossible.'

Mr. Mortimer had not been the most valued of all Mrs. Gardener Stewart's friends for nearly five years, without having learned to know when she was quite in earnest. He saw that she was quite in earnest now, and abandoned, with as good a grace as any petted poet could be expected to do, his favourite project of passing an evening with Constance, with none but his gentle friend *en tiers*. Mrs. Gardener Stewart also knew him well enough to perceive that he intended to sub-

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mit without farther remonstrance, and therefore, resuming all her indulgent gentleness of manner, she said, 'Now, then, we understand each other, and now you shall select the party, the very little party, yourself. I will choose but one, and that choice will prove how much, while amusing myself, I remember you. I will invite Mr. Rolfe; for his quiet enthusiasm and tranquil ecstasies amuse without fatiguing me, while his white locks will effectually prevent any lover-like uneasiness on your part.'

Mortimer bit his lip. 'Your consideration for my feelings,' he replied, 'is perfectly charitable.'

'You are piqued, Mortimer, at the idea that grey hairs are necessary to guaranty you from jealousy. Is it not so? Foolish man! I shall send you off now, and request you to transmit to me a programme of my party by the post. You really must go, Mortimer, and without a moment's delay, or I am certain you will find occasion to quarrel with your own shadow, and that would so terrify me!'

'"Thus conscience doth make cowards of us all,"' exclaimed Mr. Mortimer. 'I suspect that you fear the probability of my quarrelling with my own melancholy shadow, less than that of saying something saucy to your brilliant substance. But you know, beggars must not be ——. The proverb is somewhat musty, and therefore, dear, and dearest Mrs. Gardener Stewart, I give up the privilege of forming the programme, and will content myself with saying that I should be much gratified by meeting Mr. Fitzosborne to-morrow.'

'O, what a world of confidence that passeth hope may be found in that wish!' replied the lady. 'Well, be it so. But, observe, I really would *not* invite Fitzosborne only to torture him, But I think the meeting may perhaps wean him from greater danger. I will write to him immediately.'

If Mrs. Gardener Stewart imagined that this prompt compliance would force the peevish poet to retract, she was mistaken. He arose from his chair, smiled with an air of very peculiar satisfaction, as usual kissed her delicate fingers, and departed.

CHAPTER XIX.

A SEVERE TRIAL WELL SUSTAINED—A PORTRAIT FROM MEMORY.

It was fortunate for Constance that a sort of constitutional pride of heart prevented her showing any external symptoms of embarrassment on entering the drawing-room of the quietly observant and exceedingly *exigéante* Mrs. Gardener Stewart. Had she blushed violently, faltered, or looked shy, or had she in any way presented what that lady would have expressively termed '*un air bête*,' not all the Mortimers in the world could have prevented her showing that the hours which followed were disagreeable. For in a gentle, lady-like way, no one living could exhibit symptoms of being *ennuyée* more conspicuously than Mrs. Gardener Stewart. This might be either because she suffered more severely under such an affliction than the rest of her fellow-creatures, or because, like all other created and sentient beings, she had instinctively recourse to those weapons of defence with which nature had especially provided her, whenever she found herself attacked where she was so peculiarly sensible to injury. Mrs. Gardener Stewart could not, probably, have uttered a rude or a harsh word had her life depended on it, but the enormous weight of fatigue which she had the power of throwing into the expression of her delicate little features must be seen to be conceived.

As it was, however, nothing of this withering kind was called for, and nothing like it came. Mrs. Gardener Stewart had not ordered her carriage to go for the favoured beauty early enough to risk an instant of that species of unbearable *tête-à-tête* of which she had spoken to Mr. Mortimer. Constance therefore found the whole party assembled. It consisted only of the master and mistress of the house, Mr. Rolfe, Mr. Fitzosborne, and Mr. Mortimer.

Her reception by the lady was pretty and picturesque. For an instant Mrs. Gardener Stewart rose and held out her hand, timing the action so as not to render the continuance of it long, (for Mrs. Gardener Stewart hated standing,) and the moment Constance responded to it, by permitting their two delicate little hands to be joined together, she dropped again into her sofa, saying, 'How good of you! Do sit down by me. Mr. Gardener Stewart, Miss Ridley.'

Constance obeyed. She sat down by her, and she gracefully returned the gracious salutations of the well-made, well-dressed little gentleman, who, by taking two steps towards her when he was named, proclaimed himself to be her host.

Mr. Mortimer, as of right, immediately drew forward a chair, and placed himself beside her. Mr. Fitzosborne, exceedingly surprised, and perhaps not less pleased at meeting her there, approached and spoke to her with the easy friendliness of an old acquaintance. Mr. Rolfe, who was standing

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at a table in the middle of the room, from which he had just taken a good pen-and-ink drawing of Madonna Laura's head, looked at her for a moment over the top of the paper, and then read aloud, but in a voice so smooth and still as scarcely to make the air vibrate sufficiently to convey the sound, the following lines, which were written beneath the sketch.

'Vede quei be' lumi, ond'io giojoso vivo!
A lor sempre riccorro
Come a fontana d'ogni mia salute;
E quando a morte desiando corro
Sol di lor vista al mio stato soccorro.'

Then gently replacing the drawing upon the table, he seated himself in an easy chair, and continued a conversation with Mr. Fitzosborne, which the entrance of Miss Ridley had interrupted.

The appearance of Mr. Rolfe would have been considered by most people as so very nearly common-place, as scarcely to render it obnoxious to remark of any kind. He was short in stature, and extremely thin. His hands, feet, and ears, were peculiarly small, and his nearly bald head would have been thought small too, had it not been for so strong a development of that portion of it wherein phrenologists say that imagination resides, as to give the well-set *chef*, in some directions, the air of being more than commonly large. His complexion was darkly sallow, and, though his hair was almost entirely grey, his lips and cheek, albeit very smoothly shaven, still showed that, in the days of his youth, his hair must have rivalled the wing of the raven in blackness. But it was in his blue eye that the few who saw in him what was out of the common way found the *something* which distinguished him. That dark-blue eye, with its coal-black eyelash, could and did express a great deal more than it is usual to find in a face that has been a face for rather more than fifty years, and with no strongly-marked features to help it. It was, perhaps, the most completely tell-tale eye that ever was seen, and its great peculiarity was, that, look at it when you would, it always seemed to be saying something remarkable, so that the few people who thought little Mr. Rolfe worth looking at at all, often found it difficult to look at anything else. Sometimes this eye was *pétillant* with fun, sometimes melting with feeling; sometimes it had a look of abstraction and deep thought which positively approached to the sublime; and at all times showed that vivacity of spirit, and activity of intellect, which announces power even to those who comprehend it not.

It was not the first time that these remarkable eyes had rested upon the face of Constance, and attracted her attention. She had remarked him in complete and undisturbed possession of the front of an opera-box, two or three lounging gentlemen behind seeming to yield it to him as a matter of course; and he had seen her too, and had not been slow to recognize now the lovely 'new' face which had almost divided his attention with the Norma.

Dinner was never long waited for at Mrs. Gardener Stewart's, and was announced on the present occasion within ten minutes of Miss Ridley's arrival. Being the only lady, she was, as a matter of necessity, led down stairs by the master of the house, but the petted Mortimer was called on to place himself to the left of its indulgent mistress, which not only put him next her, but next Constance also, while Mr. Rolfe sat opposite to him, and Mr. Fitzosborne, notwithstanding his ancient race and noble rent-roll, had the last place assigned him. But the beautifully decorated table was round, and had, as Mr. Gardener Stewart was wont, in defence of his lady's capricious defiance of etiquette, to observe, neither top nor bottom. Besides, this arrangement placed Mr. Fitzosborne exactly opposite to Miss Ridley, and he felt not the slightest objection to it.

There were many elements of enjoyment among the small party thus assembled, besides those set in action by the Frenchman, commander-in-chief of the *batterie de cuisine*—though, excepting Constance, who was much too ignorant to find much difference between one gay-looking dinner and another, his successful efforts were not absolutely overlooked by any of them. The enjoyment of Mr. Gardener Stewart, indeed, had in it little that was absolutely independent of this very distinguished foreigner, although it was not merely the palate and the *odorat* to which he administered. In his way, Mr. Gardener Stewart had as elegant a fancy as his lady, and a taste for the beautiful as highly cultivated, and as fully developed as that of Mr. Mortimer himself. Though justly celebrated as a professor of delicate eating, this gentleman would have found no joy, or at best a very imperfect one, in viands not gracefully adjusted in their brilliant settings, not gracefully grouped in their general arrangement, or not forming, by the aid of accessories—nearly as important as themselves—a *tableau* which he considered it as the highest triumph of civilized man to possess. It was this perfection of spectacle at his dinner-table which formed the great source of his domestic bliss:—during seven years of married life, he had enjoyed it with a constancy of fondness seldom equalled; no satiety, no indifference, had stolen over his

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senses, and it seemed indeed as if increase of appetite had grown by what it fed on.'

His charming wife, who was in this, as in all else, the sweetest woman in the world, sympathized in those feelings exactly as a wife should do, and certainly *did* make it her pride, as well as her pleasure, that her husband should never feel the freezing chill of disappointment on entering his dining-room. But in addition to this truly conjugal delight, she had that of having a charming, though small, group of people around her, selected by her skill, summoned by her word, and in each of whom there was something calculated to assist in making the stealing moments of her soft existence glide on, without her suffering more than was absolutely unavoidable from the torturing effects of *ennui*.

Mr. Rolfe was far from insensible to the goods the gods had provided. He liked a good dinner; he liked a moderate quantity of good wine; he liked pretty women; he liked clever men; he liked wax lights; and he liked the Titian that hung in the full splendour of skilful illumination exactly opposite to him.

Mr. Mortimer liked to be seated near Constance, and Constance liked to be seated near Mr. Mortimer; while the philosophical Fitzosborne, meditative though gay, and satisfied though loving while unloved, was by no means the least contented of the party.

The Gardener Stewart dinners, though never tedious, were always long; but it must have been a most unfortunate windfall of a guest who would not have been inclined to sing, or say, 'O fly not yet,' had any attempt been made to shorten them. It was, on the present occasion, chiefly owing, perhaps, to Mr. Rolfe and Mr. Fitzosborne, that the conversation was so perfectly well sustained, and (despite the hood-winked, whispering god) so general. Constance was more than once startled by finding herself talking, at a strange dinner table, so that all might hear; while the vain Mortimer, vain at all points, was so well pleased to watch the increasing admiration which was legible in the critical eye of Mr. Rolfe towards the lovely girl, with whose name his own was already joined, both in opera-box chit-chat and dinner-table gossip, that he more than forgave his 'sweet friend' for having increased the party.

To account for this, however, it is necessary to observe, that Mr. Rolfe was a personage of no inconsiderable importance in the *postocracy* of May Fair. Not that he had ever published a line in his life, though he had printed many, and written more; but he had taken one particular branch of modern literature under his especial protection, and, becoming thence '*un homme special*,' he became also '*un homme important*.' Though of good family, good fortune, and very considerable classical erudition, he was infinitely better known as an Italian scholar than as anything else, and would willingly have given up every other grace and favour accorded him by fate, rather than have lost the consciousness of deserving this pre-eminence. Yet, with all his fond devotion to the literature of Italy, he had never found courage sufficient to tear himself from London long enough to stand on the native soil of her glorious poets. Nevertheless, he was an Arcadian, and not unfrequently, in writing to the many accomplished women whose Italian studies he had instigated and assisted, and whom he addressed, in little notes written with a crowquill, and consisting of a pretty sort of mosaic work, made up of playful English and sentimental Italian, he would sign himself by his Arcadian name. Hardly a desk in May Fair—or, rather, hardly a desk belonging to the fair body corporate which has taken the name of that region as its sobriquet—hardly one of these precious repositories could open its scent-breathing valves without discovering a few of these miniature missives, signed 'Ludovico Arcadico.' Nor was this the only *petit ridicule* which might be laid to his charge; but it was curious to observe how successfully he made head against them all, by the mere simple circumstance of being in earnest. So strongly and so universally was this felt, that even in that hotbed of quizzing, a London drawing-room, none but the unlucky few who blundered into arguing themselves unknown, by not knowing him, were ever seen to smile at his pastoral allusions, or heard to ridicule the enthusiasm with which he was wont to enter upon his favourite theme.

The conversation of Mr. Fitzosborne was at this time particularly agreeable to him. The young man had recently left Italy, and was personally familiar with all the scenes known but by the name to him, yet *so* known, as to give to his questionings all the affectionate interest of almost filial love, and to render the conversation that flowed from them as delightful as taste and information on one side, and genuine enthusiasm on the other, could make it.

Nor was this conversation confined to themselves alone; it soon became evident that all present were qualified to join in it; Mr. Gardener Stewart, indeed, did so with a little languor of a fine gentleman; but he knew a good deal about pictures, if but little about poetry, and Italy was therefore a subject of interest to him.

Strange to say, when such subjects were

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afoot, that the gifted, eloquent Henry Mortimer was, of all the party, the one whose observations were the least effective, and, in truth, the least worth listening to. Nobody felt this, perhaps, so sensibly as Mr. Fitzosborne; but no feeling of rivalry led to this clear-sightedness; it was simply the effect of understanding the cause which made the most brilliant man in the company appear the least so. In fact, Mortimer might at that moment have been compared to one who, with a fine voice, was singing out of tune; in a word, he was the only one present who mixed any species of affectation with what he said; and the deteriorating quality of this alloy is never felt so strongly as when conversation is circulating round a small party, all of whom chance to be really interested in the subject of it.

It was in vain that Constance, with resolute constancy of partial preference, turned her attention from every one else the moment the poet spoke—the unobtrusive Fitzosborne, and the grey-headed, stumpy little Mr. Rolfe, recalled it, in spite of herself, till at length, before Mrs. Gardener Stewart rose to leave the room, she had pretty nearly forgotten who and which of the party had the greatest claim to her especial admiration, in the enjoyment of listening, for the first time in her life, to an animated and clever discussion upon a subject in which, unaided and alone, and looking at it, as she felt, through the misty medium of much ignorance, she had found a charm that had often made a long summer day seem short in her little book-closet at Appleby.

Mr. Rolfe, by prescriptive right, claimed the privilege, wherever he dined, of following, or rather attending, the lady of the mansion to the drawing-room—in fact, it was well known that he would never dine at any house where this privilege was denied him; and it was probably for this reason that the timid Mrs. Gardener Stewart had selected him as her especial knight on the present occasion, to protect her from the dreaded danger of an after-dinner *tête-à-tête* with her young lady guest. Mr. Gardener Stewart himself took more wine at dinner than after it; nevertheless, he loved his dining-room too well to leave it without enjoying a moderate portion of that

'Solely sovereign sway and masterdom'

in it, which the vulgar dogs of yore were wont to consider so essential a part of the masculine enjoyment of a dinner-party; and the two young men now left with him shared his hospitality too frequently to be either ignorant of his habit or willing to interfere with it.

But a trio is a very different thing from a *tête-à-tête*, and Mrs. Gardener Stewart felt no dread of the interval about to ensue before the rest of the party joined her. Nor had she cause; for sundry little indulgences awaited her return to her drawing-room, quite sufficient to make it pass without jarring her charming equanimity, especially as the task of entertaining a young lady did not fall upon her.

In mounting the stairs, a delicate incense from Arabian gums greeted her as she passed, causing a sweet forgetfulness of other kinds of fragrance, which, though not unwelcome at their fitting hour, cannot reach the sense for a single instant after it without producing a 'revulsion of feeling' not pleasant to any nerves, but to those of Mrs. Gardener Stewart nothing short of agonizing. On entering the apartment which her taste and feeling had, as Mr. Mortimer expressed it, consecrated the delicate brilliance of waxen tapers enchanted without fatiguing the eye, for it was tempered by the masses of refreshing green produced by flower-stands occupying the windows, and which, with their background of Venetian blinds, relieved the sense from any sensation of glare on entering a room, which hangings of lemon-coloured satin, gilt ornaments, and a multitude of mirrors, might otherwise have rendered too bright. Nor was there wanting a forest of blossom (so mysteriously sweeter by night than by day) to render the atmosphere and the climate of this honoured abode worthy the 'delicate spirit' whose habitation it was.

Then came the perfect coffee, as black and as clear as the Eastern eyes that best love to look upon it, but which even our colder natures welcome now, as the most appropriate luxury, at the moment belonging to it, that Nature, all prodigal as she is, could contrive to furnish.

After this had passed away, and been followed by the sigh which Mr. Rolfe never failed to give as the beloved appurtenances made their exit, Mrs. Gardener Stewart settled herself on her sofa—not to sleep—none but the uninitiated in her charming ways could be led for a moment to suspect any such thing. It is true, she closed her eyes, and stretched out her pretty little feet upon their embroidered *tabouret* so as to throw her into an attitude exceedingly recumbent; nevertheless, she neither slept nor intended to sleep. Those who had the privilege and the happiness of knowing her well, were aware that this interval of perfect absence from all exertion was absolutely necessary to prepare her for listening to the many clever things which would of course be addressed to her, when the host of gentlemen who had formed her dinner-party rejoined her. So

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well aware, indeed, were the more highly favoured *habitués* that she was *not* sleeping, that it was by no means uncommon for one of them to be seen approaching to the back of the sofa with a noiseless step, and addressing her from thence, with sotto voce observations, sublime, pathetic, or witty, as the case might be, without being in any degree checked by the closed eyelids, or the air of perfect, and very soft and beautiful repose which pervaded her person; in return for which she would slightly smile, or slightly raise her eyebrows, or even slightly frown, but without moving a limb, or in any way giving the intruder reason to suppose that he had disturbed her.

Such being her state and attitude on the present occasion, Constance rose from an opposite sofa on which she had placed herself, and drawing near the book-covered table, turned over a volume or two among them in search of engravings, by which she thought she might amuse herself, without imitating the *sang froid* of her hostess, by settling herself to read, as if no Mr. Rolfe had been in the room.

But before she had succeeded in her quest, the embarrassment of her situation was relieved by Mr. Rolfe himself, who, joining her at the table, sat down beside her, and without pitching his voice below its usual pleasing tone, entered into conversation with her, without appearing to have any fear of disturbing Mrs. Gardener Stewart before his eyes.

'You seem to be a good Italian scholar, Miss Ridley. Who was your master, young lady?'

'The same governess who taught me French taught me Italian, Mr. Rolfe. But I fear you overrate both her services and my profit from them. I have not much claim to the honour of being called an Italian scholar, and certainly am not a good one,' replied Constance.

'Why so? You appear to have read the principal poets of Italy with good attention, and evident pleasure. Then why may I not call you a good Italian scholar?' demanded Mr. Rolfe, smiling upon her very kindly.

'I can neither write the language nor speak it,' replied Constance.

'The doing so can hardly be classed as a part of the same study as reading its poetry, Miss Ridley. It is possible, I believe, to read Petrarch, and Dante too, with sufficient acuteness and industry to master all their difficulties much more completely than the generality of Italians themselves can be said to do, and yet remain strangely at a loss how to write a note, or support a conversation, in the deteriorated idiom of the present day. There is a friend of mine, who shall be nameless, who is rather a remarkable instance of this. So dearly has he loved the swans of Arno, that he has, perhaps, Miss Ridley, been rather too much disposed "*metter in non cale*," all other swans. But be this as it may, the man has passed the greatest portion of a reading life in making himself familiar—oh! deeply familiar—with their delicious music—nay, has won golden commendations from the academic sages of the land for the purity, and even elegance, with which he has dared himself to invoke the sacred nine in the *dolce lingua* he so dearly loves; and yet this friend of mine, entering the house of an Italian acquaintance a few days since, found him and two other saucy Romans in act *sganascier della risa* over a note of his, containing a dozen lines, which they assured him was about as much like the colloquial idiom of the present day as one written in faithful imitation of the manner of Chaucer might be.'

'Then I should fear that the language was itself fading and dying away,' replied Constance.

'No. On the contrary, the reverential care which they bestow in their seats of learning upon the preservation of the language in all its purity, might be taken as an example for every living tongue throughout Europe. It should seem as if they held the dialect in which Petrarch and Boccaccio wrote as a sacred inheritance—a sort of heirloom which belongs to the majorat, and which must ever be preserved with care, let other treasures share what fate they may. But tell me, fair lady, to which of all the poets of Italy do you give the preference?'

'I would rather ask that question than answer it,' replied Constance, smiling.

'Would you?' replied her new acquaintance, seemingly not displeased by the evasion. 'I believe you are very wise—at least, I know that when I was long past your present age, I never chanced, even in thought, to award the first place to one, that a whole array of recollections did not assail me, right and left, from other quarters, proving me wrong.'

'Just as it happens with us,' returned Constance, 'when we are called upon to say which play of Shakspeare, or which novel of Walter Scott, we like best.'

'Exactly; but this, Miss Ridley, was only while I was young and inconstant. Things are changed with me now. Not only can I tell you which poet I hold to be the first of Italy, but to my judgment the first in the world.'

Constance listened eagerly for the name that was to follow, but Mr. Rolfe seemed to

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have fallen into a reverie, for, with his eyes shut and his hands clasped, he remained silent.

After the interval of a minute or too, she ventured to say, 'And this first of the first is —?'

'After all, the preference is, I suspect, rather the result of feeling than of judgment,' he resumed; 'but such as it is, I will not conceal it from you. My idol, Miss Ridley, is Petrarch. But I do not expect that you will agree with me. No! it is we elderly gentlemen, Miss Ridley, who, having reached the sober dignity of half a century, yet still delight in being fanned by Fancy's fluttering pinions, it is we who should bend at the shrine of Petrarch. Pope's Abelard set my heart beating at sixteen—Shakspeare's Romeo had, I believe, bedewed my rosy cheeks a whole year before. At twenty, Virgil made me long to be a wandering Prince, to be lamented like his hero, and under the influence of each magician, and of a hundred lesser ones, I have been wont to sigh forth my raptures at some particular shrine. But all this is over; and now it is Petrarch who alone can teach me to believe that I have still a heart. The eternal lamp that burns before the shrine of adamant which his genius has erected, sepulchral though it be, glows with a sacred and a gentle warmth that reaches even to the old, and sheds an atmosphere of purple light, that creates tenderness without passion. I wish not to live, Miss Ridley, beyond the power of feeling the influence of Petrarch.'

Constance listened with reverence, or something very like it, to the opinion of the accomplished critic; and though rapid recollections of splendid passages elsewhere flashed across her, like the lightning that seems to rush upon us from north, south, east, and west, at once; though the pale poet of hell and heaven arose to her mind's eye, waving aloft the wand by which he had so often held her spell-bound; and though behind him followed a whole host of 'powers,' to each of whom she had in turn sworn allegiance, she ventured not to utter a dissenting word, neither did she presume to tell the critic he was right, but waited with an air of interest and respect, most perfectly genuine, for what he should say next.

He seemed to read what was passing in her mind, for he gave her an approving smile, and said, 'You are very good to me, my dear young lady, and show, perhaps, as much acumen in silently listening with that speaking face of yours, as if you were to pour forth a whole volcano of comparative criticism against me. It may be that I owe this gentle forbearance to my silver locks; or it may be that you chance to know how many of the years which have passed over me I have devoted to the service of the temple in whose porch I venture to stand. Trust me, my dear Miss Ridley, it can only be those who, like me, have been led by some link in the chain of their life's history to touch and vibrate before the magic power of this mighty man, who can in any degree do him justice. That the number of these is considerable, his widely-spread and enduring fame most clearly proves; but despite of this, show me another name, that in the midst of so much glory falls so vainly and so vaguely on the ears of many, even of the reading public, as does that of Petrarch. I declare to Heaven, Miss Ridley, that I have seen lips curl in scorn when he is mentioned, that on other themes can utter words of wisdom. In what an immense proportion of the literary world is Petrarch '*caviare!*' That well-spring of delicious images, that treasury of tender thoughts, that masterly matching of words and ideas, that melting harmony of rhythm, that seems given to lull the sense, while it awakens it—all this is perpetually passed over by very clever fellows, and fellowesses, as mere sentimental sing-song! How strangely impossible, too, has it ever seemed (excepting in one miraculous instance) for any language of the world to produce a translation of Petrarch! Oh! it is a fine and very subtle essence that pervades those peerless pages! not easily caught, and impossible to render—impossible, save, as I have said, in one single case, wherein a Maga, gifted with a power that must bear some natural affinity to his own, has produced an echo which startles one into the belief that the disembodied spirit of Petrarch has revisited the earth—to try, perhaps, if the *tramontani* would understand him if he spoke English. Do you know the translation, Miss Ridley, to which I allude?'

'O yes, I think so!' replied Constance, eagerly, 'you say there is no second—you can only mean the translations of Lady Dacre.'

'Most true, most true,' returned the delighted Mr. Rolfe. 'And now let us shake hands, Miss Ridley, and henceforth account me, I pray you, amongst those honoured by your acquaintance. You have refreshed my spirit most delightfully by that look and accent of yours. Yes, my dear, I spoke of the translations of Lady Dacre, which stand as much alone in literature as their originals.'

At this moment the gentlemen from the dinner-table entered, and Mr. Rolfe sighed with as much sincerity, because their *tête-à-tête* was broken up, as he could possibly have done had he been five-and-twenty years younger.

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Mr. Gardener Stewart then approached Miss Ridley, and made several observations to her in the best possible taste, and tone of elegant inanity; and here ended, as he conceived, his domestic duties for the day; for he remained no longer in the room afterwards than was necessary for taking his coffee, and the '*chasse*' by which he always followed it, stealing away as unobtrusively as might be.

It was then that Mr. Mortimer thought it time to assert his right to the undivided attention of Miss Ridley; and as no one thought proper to dispute it with him, Constance enjoyed the great delight of hearing him talk without interruption in his own sweet whisper, till the carriage of Mrs. Hartley was announced; when she again received the thanks of her gentle hostess for the favour she had done her, and departed, deeply impressed with the conviction that her friend Penelope had never blundered so completely as when she mistook the soft languor of Mrs. Gardener Stewart for impertinence; and conscious only that from some cause or other the visit she had made her was by far more delightful than any other she had yet enjoyed. But whether this were owing to the flattering reception she had met from her, or from the marked attention of Mr. Mortimer, or to the pleasure she had felt from her conversation with Mr. Rolfe, or from the general interest of all she had listened to at the dinner-table, she was unable to decide; the only point upon which she had no doubt being, that the day must ever be remembered as one of the brightest of her life.

Whether Constance looked lovelier than ever because she was so happy, or whether the admiration she evidently inspired in Mr. Fitzosborne, led Mr. Mortimer to be more aware than ever that he could not live without her, might also have been matter of doubt; but certain it is that as the poet escorted her to the carriage, he asked her, in a tone and manner that to the most inexperienced could admit but of one interpretation, whether he might hope to find her disengaged, if he did himself the honour of calling on her at four o'clock on the following day? If any sound accompanied the assenting bow which replied to this agitating question, it was inaudible to Mr. Mortimer; but he seemed satisfied, and bending low his uncovered head as the carriage drove off, sent her home with a heart throbbing so violently as to prevent her closing her eyes in sleep, till long after the hour which at Appleby was wont to witness her waking.

CHAPTER XX.

A BILLET-DOUX AND AN OFFER OF MARRIAGE.

To Penelope, and Penelope alone, did Constance, on the following morning, relate the concluding circumstance of her last night's adventures, and to her confided the care of so arranging matters as to permit of her hearing whatever Mr. Mortimer might wish to say, without interruption.

'As to *what* he wishes to say, Constance,' replied her friend, 'there cannot, as you must well know, be the slightest doubt; and therefore I would strongly advise your taking mamma into your confidence, who would settle the where, and the how, for you, much better than I can.'

'Impossible!' cried Constance vehemently, and colouring to her very temples. 'You are quite mistaken, Penelope, in supposing that I have not the slightest doubt—and just imagine my feelings and condition, if it should happen to turn out that I am wrong! Fancy my having to make a speech to Mrs. Hartley, to the effect that I must have mistaken Mr. Mortimer's obliging manners as being something more particular than he intended—for that he had only called to say something about—something else.'

Penelope smiled, and fixing an earnest gaze upon her friend, said, 'Constance! You doubt, as you say, the nature of Mr. Mortimer's errand, and I, on my side, doubt your being in love. O no, Constance, you could not speak thus, if you were.'

'What can make you say that, Penelope? I am scarcely at this moment in a position to boast of a sentiment which as yet, you know, I ought, by every law of maidenhood, to conceal in my own breast. But should Mr. Mortimer really and truly ask me to become his wife, you will find that you have been altogether mistaken, if you suppose I shall refuse him,' said Constance, somewhat reproachfully.

Penelope, still looking at her with an inquiring and a puzzled eye, replied, 'Then you *are* in love with him, my Constance! For sure am I, that were he the first match in Europe, you would not accept him if it were otherwise.'

'I thank you for that opinion, most gratefully,' returned Constance, with something in the slightest degree in the world approaching to a toss of her beautiful head; 'I may hope, then, that your judgment of me is not exactly that of my admirable new friend, Lady Dort, who having, it seems, remarked that both Mr. Mortimer and Mr. Fitzosborne had done me the honour of offering

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me an arm to get through the crowd, actually found time, in the midst of all her multitudinous fine speeches, to whisper in my ear, "Remember, *belle des belles*,"—(I do begin to think her very odious)—"remember that the poet Mortimer is, comparatively speaking, a poor man, and not highly born; whereas the Fitzosborne is nobly connected, and immensely rich!" Was it not most atrociously impertinent?'

'*Pas mal*,' replied Penelope, laughing. 'But to return to the real hero. You may depend, dearest Constance, upon my doing my very best to favour your wishes for a *tête-à-tête*—but, as you well know, I am not omnipotent. The best way will be for us both to decline the after-luncheon drive to-day. That will probably induce Margaret and Caroline to go—and then the business will be easy enough. I will be in my bedroom and you shall be in the drawing-room when Mr. Mortimer arrives.'

The flutter of spirits in which poor Constance passed the hours of this eventful morning may be imagined without much difficulty; her complexion varied from red to pale, and from pale to red, as if in the first state of a malignant fever, while her fingers trembled so as to make the mere appearance of using her needle a matter of difficulty.

In this state of things it was really a relief and a blessing to have her attention taken off from herself and her palpitations by having a letter presented to her. It was of delicate texture, and very highly scented, so that Constance, notwithstanding her absence of mind, immediately divined that it was from a lady—nay, even suspected that no hand less delicate than that of Mrs. Gardener Stewart could have despatched it to her. This idea, despite of all the more powerful emotions which at that moment filled her breast, gave her considerable pleasure, and she opened it eagerly; but instead of what she hoped for and expected, she found the following lines:

'I too well know that a soupçon—Ah, more than a *soupçon* of what has long existed, but has never yet met the blaze of day, must render the appearance of this little *envoy* a matter of less surprise than—than—Ah! *ma charmante demoiselle!* where can I find *une expression assez douce, assez modeste*, to suit at once your feelings and my own? *Mais, où suis-je? Moi? Moi, qui aime tellement la douce légèreté de la jeunesse, est-ce moi qui veut écrire comme un vieux radoteur?*' Forbid it, youth! forbid it, joy! In one word, I come to wait upon you; and lest your amiable friend Mrs. Hartley should, in the chilling prudence of mature female age, think it needful to check the eager feelings of manly prime, suggest to her remembrance that I am the same individual, and no other, who almost in boyhood saved your "belle vie" (as the immortal Molière calls the vital spark), and who, through nearly the whole course of his young life, has watched over you with care beyond his years, and an interest almost too grave for one of his character to feel. But there are miracles besides those written in the lives of the saints!

'Such being my claims, ma charmante demoiselle, I confess that I do not anticipate finding the doors which enclose you shut against me when I appear before them. In this hope, *chantons, dansons! Ah, vive la folie!*

'Ever, with profound consideration,
'Your devoted
'WILLIAM WESTON.'

An epistle from such a correspondent at such a moment would have obtained little attention, had it been less absurd; but not all the gravity of the case to which the critical moment that was approaching gave birth, could altogether destroy its effect, and Constance laughed heartily; nor did she laugh alone; Mr. William Weston's letter was respectfully submitted to Mrs. Hartley, and counsel asked as to the answer to be returned to it.

'Upon my word, my dear Miss Ridley,' she said, 'I feel the reasoning of this young Mr. Weston to be unanswerable; and I think that the only reply you can give, is an assurance that he will be welcome. But it will be necessary to prepare yourself, my dear, for what is to follow. Of course you perceive that it is the intention of this playful youth to offer himself to your acceptance?'

'Do you really think that he will ever be steady enough to do so grave a thing, Mrs. Hartley?' returned Constance.

'I do indeed, my dear. He hints that it will be a miracle, but, nevertheless, depend upon it, it will be done; and what shall you say to him?'

'I shall tell him that he is too young.'

'And if he reminds you that every day will amend that involuntary fault, and assures you, moreover, as I am quite sure he will do, that his young life is in your hands, and that he shall infallibly die if you refuse him—what will you say then?'

'Why, then, I will tell him that, being conscious that the gravity of my character does not accord with the gaiety of his, I feel compelled by a sense of duty to decline the honour he offers me, but that, should I ever marry, I would endeavour so to educate one

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of my daughters as to make her in all ways worthy of becoming his wife.'

'Very well, Constance; that, I think, must content him, it is at once so reasonable and so amiable. Now, then, write to say, that we shall all be very happy to see him—I think William said his messenger was waiting.'

Constance obeyed, and wrote a soberly civil note, informing her ex-guardian that the Hartley family, as well as herself, would be happy to see him on the morrow, or any day after, that it might suit him to call.

'Well, what have you said, my dear?' demanded Mrs. Hartley, when she perceived her folding her despatch.

Constance read the note, with the exception of the words which guarded the sanctity of the passing day, and the note being despatched, she relapsed into the nervous condition from which it had roused her, and while the rest of the party continued to amuse themselves by anticipating the form and manner of Mr. William Weston's proposal, she grew paler and paler, as she meditated, first, on the probable difficulty of receiving Mr. Mortimer alone, and then on the agitating uncertainty of what he might say, and how he might say it, and how she should find voice to answer him, if she indeed received him without witnesses.

Luckily for her, the party were making themselves too heartily merry to remark it, and her sympathizing friend Penelope skilfully covered her retreat from the mirth of which she was the subject, by declaring it to be evident, that though she said little, she thought much on the proposal which was about to be made to her, and was preparing herself to receive it *comme il faut*. 'Is not this true, Constance?' she demanded, looking at her with a good deal of mischievous meaning.

'Quite true,' returned Constance, smiling a little, and colouring a good deal—an answer which, from its matter-of-fact sincerity, delighted Mrs. Hartley and her younger daughters inexpressibly.

'If I were you, Constance, I would not go out to-day,' said Penelope.

'Certainly not!' exclaimed Margaretta. 'You do not think of stirring, Miss Ridley, do you?'

'Indeed I think I had better stay at home,' replied Constance, in as steady a voice as she could.

'And so get it over at once?' said Penelope. 'All joking apart,' she added, 'I think you are perfectly right.'

This led of course to a little more laughter, but the point was gained, and at about half-past three o'clock Constance found herself alone in Mrs. Hartley's drawing-room, with the knowledge that Penelope had told the man-servant who remained at home, that if any persons called and inquired for Miss Ridley, they were to be let in.

An expected offer of marriage is always an agitating thing, but poor Constance, like some millions of her predecessors, most heartily believed that no one ever before expected a visit, big with the fate both of the visiter and the visited, under circumstances so vehemently agitating as her own.

'If it were any other man,' thought she, 'I could not feel thus! But Mortimer! the celebrated, the illustrious Mortimer! the poet over whose delicious verses I have so often hung enraptured! That he, that Henry Mortimer should be coming, as I know he is, to offer his honoured name to me! O it is too, too much to support with anything like composure and dignity! The fact seems so incredible, that it throws both heart and head into confusion. I know not what I think—I positively know not what I feel!'

Sometimes, as she looked at the time-piece, the interval before his arrival seemed endless, while at others she trembled and felt faint, as she saw how near and more near the index approached the hour he had named.

At length, a rap was heard. It was not a footman's rap—O no!—it was not a tradesman's rap—No, no! And now a step, and now the lock of the door was moved, and then her half-closed eyes, half-closed in faintness, opened, and she beheld Henry Mortimer!

His first glance was round the room, to ascertain that they were alone; the next was at the blushing face of Constance, wherein he read—not strange matters, for full well he knew the characters so fairly written there. Nor Porson nor Parr ever studied the Greek alphabet as Mr. Mortimer had studied the face of woman, when under the influence of the tender feelings which it had been his bliss and bane (as he expressed it) to inspire.

He approached her with a rapid step, and replacing her upon the sofa, from which in her agitation she had risen to receive him, he ventured to retain her trembling hand while he poured forth the feelings which at that moment held entire possession of him.

'Constance!' he murmured, 'O let me call you by the name that angels have wafted to my ears in sleep—to which the pulses of my heart echo, when I hear it spoken when awake, and compared to which all other names, all other sounds, are dull and profitless as is the chilling silence of the tomb! Constance! my Constance! O Heaven!—how sweetly does that averted face show all

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it seeks to hide! Constance! my Constance! How little need of words have hearts that speak as ours do now!'

* * * * * *

But it is really treacherous to go on. Long before Mrs. Hartley and her daughters returned from their drive, Mr. Mortimer had offered himself to Miss Ridley, and Miss Ridley had accepted him.

'Well, my dear,' said Mrs. Hartley, as she entered; 'has he been here?'

Constance bowed in reply.

'And has he offered?'

Constance quietly answered 'Yes,' and then added, making a sign to Penelope to follow her as she left the room, 'you shall hear all about it another time, Mrs. Hartley.'

'Good Heaven! she is not going to accept him, is she?' exclaimed Margaretta.

THE NOTE-BOOK OF AN IRISH BARRISTER.—No. XXI.*

MR. JUSTICE BURTON.

We have ranged over an ample space in our sketches of the eminent men of the past and present times who adorn the Irish bar—to us a not unpleasant task, and to the members of our profession we hope not unprofitable. The portraits which we attempted to draw were limited to such characters as shone on the professional stage, their political conduct being merely incidental. The very names of such men are a confession of their great intellectual superiority; their deeds form a part, and a not unimportant part, of the national history, and it was just and necessary, both as a picture of the past and a guide to the future, to exhibit them in their amplest proportions. But we should only discharge half our duty if we were to confine ourselves to the characters of those men, unquestionable as were their merits, and great as were their services. There are others not less worthy of notice, even though they do not command the national reverence by public displays in the field of politics, whose tranquil but useful existence is spent in far different scenes, shunning the public gaze from a natural and modest reserve of disposition, but whose virtues for that very reason are more deserving of record. They have proceeded quietly on their mission of justice, avoiding the turbulence and inquietude of public life, content to remain in the shade while others basked in the sunlight, and appealing only to their own hearts for the exceeding rich reward which ever accompanies a righteous and conscientious discharge of duty. But there is another and a stronger reason why such men as Judge Burton should occupy our attention. It is because his conduct, if properly studied, and his example, if carefully followed, cannot fail to produce a salutary effect, for he is one of the greatest living instances of the fortune, fame, and honour which accompany laborious industry. An Englishman and a stranger among us, confiding only in his own abilities, without patronage, without family ties or connexions, or any of those artificial aids which force up the young lawyer like a hothouse cucumber, he relied on himself—after all, the safest, surest, and most permanent of supports. He had none of those accessories to success which might whisk him aloft into that bright land to which so many aspire, and in which, after they have floated joyously for a moment, they come down like Bacon's rocket, a blackened stick, after the slight combustible matter is exhausted. Not so with Judge Burton. Chancery friends or familiars he had none; he had to make them all for himself, and did make them. We venerate the man who could make the difficulties which would be ruinous to an ordinary disposition, serviceable in giving strength and perfection to his qualities. He brought to the study of the law a resolute purpose and a philosophical mind, and never quitted it until by degrees the whole subject, in all its relations and consequences, was spread out before his view. At first timid and nervous, and with a mind apparently ill adapted for the struggles and contentions of the forum, he overcame this amiable weakness, and hardened himself gradually for the encounter. The courts of law are no theatre to be trodden by men of pensive spirits and delicate sensibilities. They are, to these countries, what the Olympic games were to Greece; and when a Pindar shall arise to sing the triumphs achieved in our modern Elis, he must chant the praises of heroes who have gloried in the dust, and sweat, and turmoil of blackletter strife—of men thick-skinned, buoyant, bold, and fearless—intrepid in attack, quick in recovering from defeat, prompt in all kinds of resources, and unscrupulous in their application.

We have remarked that the example of Judge Burton is well worthy the attention of our rising generation of lawyers. It is far safer to take him as a model, and, by emulating his industry and activity of mind, to acquire that deserved success which followed his honourable efforts, than to strain after unattainable heights of excellence, which it is

* Continued from vol. xi. p. 291.

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very pleasant to aspire to, but not one in a thousand is destined to realize. Lord Brougham somewhere relates a story which illustrates what we say. A young and very ambitious gentleman, of no mean order of intellect, who had worked diligently to acquire the knowledge and habits of composition which are essential to oratorical distinction, and was entering on the profession of the bar, had never been present at any great display of those powers which he was anxious to acquire. He was accordingly taken by a friend to the gallery of the House of Commons when a subject of deep national interest was being discussed, and, as it happened, with a fair degree of eloquence. On his way back he became meditative, and when asked by his friend whether he might not go and do likewise, replied, 'It is useless to pursue the matter any further; such powers of eloquence I can never hope to attain, for I cannot even form any notion how such things are done;' on which his lordship very pithily and appropriately remarks, that if this young man had heard a tolerable third-rate speaker, he would not, most probably, have arrived at the position in which the most eloquent thinker of his day, Gibbon, found himself, when the bad speakers filled him with alarm, and the great ones with despair. If this young man were Irish, and had listened to Plunkett or Bushe, he might have come to the same conclusion; but had he pitched on a lower and more sober level, like Judge Burton, instead of yielding to despair, and abandoning the bar, he would have persuaded himself to follow his example: though failing in the lines of exertion which led to the height where 'fame's proud temple shines afar,' and of making his name echoed through the world, yet the avenues to a more solid though less dazzling success remained open to him, which laborious industry might reasonably lead him to attain.

It is not true, as is generally said, that Curran was introduced to Mr. Burton in England, and that he brought him over to this country. The facts, as we have heard, are these. Mr. Burton conducted the business of a very eminent firm in London, and was sent over to Ireland on the subject of a purchase of property. He had an interview with the Irish solicitor whose counsel Curran was, and by him he was first introduced to the great advocate. Curran, who was never a very profound lawyer, and did not comprehend the very intricate questions in which the purchase was involved, had various meetings with Mr. Burton on the subject, and found him not only shrewd and sensible on matters of fact, but deeply versed in matters of law, which excited his astonishment; and what pleased him above all was the manly fairness and honesty with which he developed circumstances known only to the firm for whom he was engaged, and which, if concealed, would considerably lessen the value of the property. Curran was no bad judge of character—he saw in Mr. Burton all the elements of professional power—he made him an offer to enter his employment, and it was accepted. That he discharged his duties ably and faithfully, is proved by the fact that a lasting friendship was the result—that Curran adopted every means to promote the interests of his friend, and when that great man lay on his deathbed at Brompton, he sent for Mr., then Serjeant, Burton, and he was the last person whom he recognized. All Curran's business passed through his hands—he noted his briefs, and made up his arguments. We heard an eminent solicitor say, that he was once despatched with a very heavy brief in a very important cause to Curran, who was then circulating his flashes of wit and merriment at the dinner-table, and he wrote with a pencil on a slip of paper, 'Carry the brief to Mr. Burton, *but I will thank you for the fee.*' Our informant did so; Mr. Burton happened to be also at dinner—a very light one—a small roll, coffee, and an egg or two. He had companions too in the shape of a pile of law-books, which he consulted alternately with a draught of the sober berry's decoction.

He continued in Curran's employment for some years, and in the mean time prepared himself for the bar, to which he was called in 1792. Almost immediately he got into excellent practice, and became remarkable for the conscientious application of his time and knowledge to the business with which he was entrusted. The attorneys are a sagacious and quick-scented race—they soon discovered in Mr. Burton, whose professional aptitude was before known to many of them from his connection with Curran, exactly that sort of man they wanted. Legal knowledge was then more sparingly diffused through the bar than at present, while business was more abundant. Men's minds were too ambitiously directed—a seat in Parliament was of far more importance than the science of pleading—success in oratory was more highly prized than the tardy drudgery of the law. Like the prince in the fairy tale, all panted for the precious stones that hung on the boughs of the lofty palm tree, but spurned the more valuable but less dazzling gems that lay in their path. We are very far from saying that we had not then able lawyers—some even greater than we have had since; but as a profession the law was not the sole and separate pursuit of

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those men whose abilities, if directed to that one object, could enable them to explore with success what Bethel calls 'the unfathomable mysteries of the law.' In such circumstances Mr. Burton made his appearance, and his advocacy was soon seized on with avidity. It is remarked by a very eminent authority, that until the practice is combined with the study of the law, the most diligent student cannot be said to have made himself a good lawyer, nor can he even ascertain whether or not he is destined ever to attain that eminence. Without stopping to inquire into the full truth of this assertion, it is at least certain that Mr. Burton was an able lawyer when his practice was very little, and that he never found the want of that knowledge in any branch of the profession. The fact is, that some intellects are so constituted as to have an almost intuitive perception of that peculiarly complex information which costs others the labour of a life. Their faculties are so adjusted as to acquire with little or no difficulty at a glance what others by the most incessant study cannot comprehend. This generally results from overlooking, or the natural inability to reach, first and fundamental principles. Instead of the empirical recollection of cases and decisions scattered over an immense surface, which make the memory a storehouse of bewilderment and disorder, a confused and chaotic heap of useless knowledge, encumbering instead of enriching the understanding, Mr. Burton applied himself to the only course which renders the apparent darkness of the law clear and intelligible. The main principles are few and simple—the natural relations between man and man suggest, and common sense and common reason carry out and confirm them. The mastery lies not in treasuring up a dull mass of decisions gathered with fearful labour, and with very little profit. One rule, the reason of which is thoroughly canvassed and comprehended, is of more real value to the learner and more facilitates his success in acquisition, than the labour of a year in the empirical fashion. This was Mr. Burton's mode—first the rule, then the reason, and last the application; and when to this are added his singularly quick and clear apprehension, his compact and firm understanding, his prodigious memory, and unsurpassed assiduity, we are not surprised that he acquired that rare mastery over our jurisprudence. It may be well said of him that he had a genius for law. He dived into all its secret recesses with the anxious spirit of a discoverer; he delighted in black letter as much as others do in the last new novel—old reports were favourite playthings, and though, like Chief Baron Joy, he did not carry Coke or Croke James to Bath or Cheltenham to amuse his leisure hours, he did not love their quaint contents the less fervently. But with all his admiration of the old lawyers, 'the great oracles and fountains of our law,' he kept clear of their extravagant quips and crotchets—he was not led astray even by their high authority; he reasoned on their principles, but he confided in the strength of his own judgment, which seldom led him into mistakes. The best proof of this is, that in all the writs of error, from the Irish Exchequer Chamber to the House of Lords, not a single reversal took place in his decisions. Whether he was in the majority or minority, it invariably happened that the judgment of the Lords coincided with his opinions. The clearness and accuracy of his language was at all times remarkable—at the bar, as well as on the bench. Mr. Justice Story, in one of his judgments, says, 'The language of the learned Judge Burton, to whom I have alluded, is marked with equal strength and purity of expression;' and in a case in first *Meeson* and *Welsby*, Mr. Baron Parke says of his judgment in *Warburton* and *Ivie*, that it expresses the rule of interpreting statutes in the best language. We will give this canon, for it is a fair specimen of his legal style, and condenses in a few words the learning of a volume. 'I apprehend it is a rule in the construction of statutes, that in the first instance the grammatical sense of the words is to be adhered to. If that is contrary to, or inconsistent with, any expressed intention, or any declared purpose of the statute; or if it would involve any absurdity, repugnance, or inconsistency in its different provisions, the grammatical sense must then be modified, extended, or abridged, so far as to avoid such an inconvenience, but no farther.' Not a word in this sentence is superfluous—not one that has not a distinct force and meaning—it is the pith and essence of all that has ever been written on the subject.

Mr. Burton went the Munster circuit, which is to the Irish what the northern is to the English bar. There the prizes were the greatest, but the competition was proportionably formidable, for the ablest advocates at the bar 'sought fame in that contentious ring.' He appeared first in some great fishery case, (questions much more frequent then than now,) and at once established himself in public favour, so that in Cork, where he secured his first triumph, and which is the best assize town in Ireland, he soon had more business than the old favourites — so great, indeed, that he was in the habit of stopping for a week after the termination of circuit, to clear off the mass of opinions which were submitted

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to him. Where the heavy artillery of deep law and powerful argument was required, Mr. Burton was always secured at any price, while Mr. Pennefather and Mr. O'Connell were brought in to scour the field with the less formidable array of cross-examination, wit, and eloquence. Mr. Burton, however, was often very successful in his addresses to juries. In the celebrated action for libel against the author of the 'Nosegay,' a work which made a great noise in its day, Mr. Burton was counsel for the defendant O'Grady. He was a barrister, and in one of his Nosegays most bitterly libelled a Limerick gentleman. In his charge to the jury, Judge Johnson stated that the libel was aggravated by the fact that the 'Nosegay' would be immortal, and take rank with the satires of Horace, Juvenal, and Pope. Now we have found great difficulty in getting a peep at the ever-blooming amaranth, which, after many searches, we discovered at last in a public library, crumbling into oblivion, in company with a half-dozen pamphlets on the State of the Nation, &c. This only proves that Judge Johnson's prophecy is not likely to be fulfilled, for twenty years are but a poor segment of eternity. However, the 'Nosegay' was a great terror in its time, and Mr. B., who fell under the ban of the barrister in consequence of some money dealings, was rebuked in the following delicate strain:—

'Come B., for tardy justice takes her seat—
Convicted usurer—convicted cheat—
In every mischief actor and abettor—
Self-vaunted infidel, and tampering traitor,
Thou foul polluter of thy sister's bed,
Fraud, usury, incest, treason on thy head:
Of crime a climax, or Pandora's box,
Which every precious gem of hell unlocks.
One eye half-closed—half out thy slavering tongue,
Thy twisted nose from Nature's post half wrung—
Cadaverous cheek, and mischief-making grin,
Emblem and offspring both of death and sin;
Come into court, thy fiery ordeal dare,
And hold thy hand up at the public bar.

* * *

But see aloft, and near the sheriff's box,
The black-browed spectre of poor *Charles Fox*—
See with one hand his angry eyes he rubs,
And in the other holds the five of clubs;
While in his front in burning letters shines,
Thy wealth and infamy, the game of *quinze*:
He thought, for all your bonnet,* you played fair,
Nor e'er supposed a sharper could get there,
Till to his cost the sad reverse he found,
In six nights lost you sixty thousand pound!!'

* We extract the following amusing note, which is peculiarly interesting, *if true*, from what is there detailed of Charles Fox. 'Every man knows that at a game of *quinze* a five is the winning card, and a man getting into a club with his sleeve or his pocket full of fives, would break the entire of a society formed of unsuspecting men of honour, particularly where play was frightfully deep. B. always contrived to sit with his back to the wall, and wore a green silk bonnet, or shade, to protect, as he said, his eyes from the light, but it appeared that he maintained a constant intercourse between his hand and his bonnet. Mr. Fox, who had an excellent memory, counted the four fives already out, and having fourteen in his hand, which in that case could not be beaten, backed his hand for *five thousand pounds*. B. put down fifteen, the five of clubs and a tenth card. Mr. Fox immediately got up, the waiters ran in on B., and seizing his arm, delivered his sleeve of six fives! It is to be observed, that in playing this game, as fast as the cards are dealt out they are swept off the table, which was in the favour of B., for the pack never could be examined for extra fives; but, after the detection, a mountain of fives was detected upon the floor about his chair. Next day there was a meeting of the club, and there being a large sum of this ill-gotten money in the hands of the master, they made an order on him not to pay it over, on which Fox, who was the principal sufferer, said, "Let the s——l have the money, and have done with him." What's very comical, this B. is a vain man, and so he ought, for he won 200,000*l.* in one campaign at that club from the ablest men in England.'

Such a desperate libel had Mr. Burton to defend. The damages were laid at ten thousand pounds; but whether from the ability of the advocacy, or the strange facts which came out on the trial, Mr. B. got only *five hundred*, which O'Grady looked on as a triumph. Mr. Burton's speech on that occasion is well remembered at the bar, and all confess that it was most unexpectedly brilliant, and produced an extraordinary impression—the crowded court simultaneously bursting into a shout of acclamation when he had closed. The published report is said not to be genuine, having had the benefit of the revising touches of Mr. O'Grady; but enough remains to convince, after making allowance for the declamatory flashes, that it was a most powerful piece of advocacy; and if the plaintiff were only half as wicked as he is there represented, then the defendant was a sadly injured man. Perhaps the vices of a man were never so forcibly catalogued as in the following:—

'If the reports against this man had been unfounded, they would, like all reports of that kind, long since have died away, but you have them here in an unbroken uniform tenour of more than thirty years, increasing as his course extends. The first stain was cast in 1786, and you find the reputations of all the successive crimes and vices flowing like tributary streams into the main channel, swelling its volume and deepening its complexion. For the human character may be compared to a river, which, if intrinsically pure, soon works itself clear from casual defilement, but if foul at its source, every stain it receives incorporates with its elementary particles; it thickens as it runs, and gathering filth at all its incurvations, becomes a sink before it disembogues.

'Review, I beseech you, the history of this man's life, and then review this parallel, and observe how all these stains have been cast upon him, not by individuals, but by whole societies. You will find the first stain cast upon him in 1786 by one of the first societies in the British metropolis. In 1789 we find

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that stain deepened by the repudiation of a grand jury of your own country, and in the following year by the verdict of a record jury. In 1797 you find him stained as the defiler of his sister's bed by the whole society of the country, and in the year after you find him stained as a rebel, and the chancellor affixing the great seal to that reputation. In 1804 you find him stained in a public assembly at Ennis as an accomplice in seduction, not to indulge his own sensualities, but those of a great man — the most contemptible depravity of which the human character is capable — where brutality goes hand in hand with self-abasement, and where barren vice is its own reward. In 1807 you find him stained by the verdict of a jury with usury, a crime prohibited by the laws of God and man; and we find him by the same jury stained with a crime which strikes at the very root of justice, and would make our judicial dispensations as false as dicers' oaths. In 1810 you find himself practising a crime which in 1807 he had suborned in another, and violating an oath which he profaned and dedicated to the administration of justice, and you now have him here in his old age challenging the meed of that exemplary reputation which he has thus accumulated.

'Gentlemen of the jury, if you decide in favour of my client, you will do a crying act of justice, and establish through the world the value which you set on moral character. If you decide against him, you will give the world a fearful view of the moral and social condition of this country. You may, perhaps, enable this wretched man to sleep upon *his* bed, but you will not sleep upon *yours*, for I will tell you what you cannot do, and I will tell you what you may do. It is vain for you, I think, by any measure of damages you can give this man, to retrieve him, or set up his reputation, for God has set his brand upon him, and it is not within the reach of mortal man to cancel the impressions of the living God.'

In this vehement declamation we can scarcely recognize the chaste and serene style of Mr. Burton, who was at all times remarkable for the force and simplicity of his language. On this subject, however, we will have to say a few words hereafter. In the mean time the general opinion seems to be, that, though the principal features of his fine speech are preserved in the report, yet that to serve a purpose various passages had been interpolated, and its purity discoloured by extravagant sentiments which never had been uttered. Mr., now Baron, Pennefather, in his reply, which does not glow in the same eloquent light, for the satisfactory reason that the defendant selected according to his own taste, twitted Mr. Burton very happily on his profound knowledge of the poets, 'always thinking, until then, that he was more conversant with Coke than Churchill, with Plowden than Pope.' In the case of Sir J. M. Doyle against Browne for criminal conversation, Mr. Burton, for the plaintiff, delivered one of his best speeches, although the published report is wretchedly meagre as well as grossly inaccurate. But it was in the very heavy and important cause of *Trimbleston* and *Trimbleston*, where he led throughout,—and in the *Crown* against *O'Grady*,—that he showed the very highest ability, both as a lawyer and an advocate. His arguments in the latter combine the profoundest knowledge of law, the clearest and closest reasoning, and the most masterly exposition of great principles. Never was a cause more ably conducted; and the extraordinary power he displayed raised him to the rank of a first-rate institutional lawyer. In 1806 he obtained a silk gown, in 1817 he was appointed second sergeant, and the year after first sergeant, and in 1820, on the resignation of Judge Mayne, he was promoted to the vacant seat in the King's Bench. He is now in his eighty-fifth year, with his mental powers as fresh and vigorous as ever. There is not in his faculties the least trace of dimness; and after twenty-one years of indefatigable judicial duties—for his absence even for one day is a miracle—none can perceive the understanding impaired, though his shrivelled and attenuated little body gives warning that it is time to afford himself relief. In one event only, we understand, is he disposed to resign—if the vacancy should be filled by his son-in-law, Mr. West,—a very improbable event, so long as her majesty's present ministers hold office.

As a lawyer, Mr. Justice Burton ranks in the very highest class. He reminds one more of one of the ancient fountains of the law than of a person who had been trained in the whim and crotchet school of modern times—whose knowledge is confined rather to an acquaintance with authorities and cases, than the scientific truths on which they are constructed, and without which there can be no solid information. It may be said of him, as Sir Vicary Gibbs said of Sir James Mansfield, that in his arguments 'he declared the law;' and while others only left the impression on the hearer that very numerous and very recondite authorities had been cited, and a vast deal of learning paraded, his reasoning penetrated the mind, and forced conviction to his positions. His familiarity with the great principles of jurisprudence, and his knowledge of their foundations, was as accurate and comprehensive as his application of them was judicious and masterly. While he was not inattentive to the less important parts of the argument—for he could trace the most minute and subtle distinctions with a microscopic eye—he reserved all his power for the governing principles which swayed the main body of his reasoning, and those he always developed in bold relief, and with the fullest breadth. He took the utmost pains to render everything intelligible and precise, and showed more anxiety that nothing necessary should be omitted, than that all superfluity should be excluded. Sur-

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passed by many in the qualities that dazzle or astonish, and undervaluing the mere accomplishments and embellishments of advocacy, none went beyond him in unwearied prudence, in matchless sagacity, in multifarious knowledge, in fertility of resources to meet and encounter unexpected difficulties, in firmness of purpose and determined self-reliance; so that he was pointed out by universal consent as the ablest lawyer, and one of the safest advocates at the bar. His knowledge was sound, and eminently practical—available for every purpose, whether to ensure a victory or grace a defeat, and, like all his other qualities, was less for ornament than for use. All affectation, whether of manner or language, he scorned, all technical refinements he disliked, and never resorted to their support unless no other hope remained; for, avoiding that cold, definite, and sterile system—if system it can be called—with which the unphilosophical and unreasoning practitioner is bolstered up for a show, he more worthily aspired to reach those higher regions of the law which are visited by the pure light of reason, and from which alone it is reflected in strength and purity. Hence he proposed problems to the bench, of which Coke might have surmised or studied the solution. All other resources he set at naught, save those of strong sense, clear, and well-defined ideas, anxious devotion to the object to be acquired—which may be inferred from the plain, manly, and downright matter-of-fact character of his understanding. He displayed that extraordinary quickness of apprehension against which the best disguised sophistry could make no stand, and that singular acuteness, aided by the most untiring industry, against which the difficulties of the most intricate subject opposed themselves in vain. His exposition of principles was orderly and methodical, as his statement, whether of reasoning or of facts, was straightforward and free from ambiguity. The easy and natural sequence of his arguments, each, as it were, growing out of that which preceded, formed a chain of the most pure ratiocination. It was like a piece of exquisite mechanism, 'wheel within wheel involved,' to the unpractised eye seeming all complication and confusion, but, at the same time, beautifully and harmoniously contrived to work out the desired object. He was invariably consulted on every important case; and though no man could give a prompt opinion with less trouble, yet none laboured with more scrupulous rigour to satisfy his conscience and his client at the same time. Whether the fee was one or one hundred guineas was all the same—he knew no difference.

Malignity itself cannot accuse our modern advocates of beguiling us by the witchcraft of their eloquence. They stand clear of the guilt of ministering to a jury wit, fancy, or pathos. Strong and lofty flights, such as once distinguished our advocates, are not to be found among their offences. It is sheer calumny to accuse them of purloining a weapon from the armory of oratory. They toil through their narrow round of systematic dulness—they creep along the old low and hackneyed level to which they have been accustomed, and the lips and the language of a Curran, a Plunkett, and a Bushe, are of the things to be found only in Astolpho's valley. Jury addresses have, in their hands, a dreary, prosaic tameness, which torpifies both those who use and those who hear them. A shallow, spiritless, vulgarized style, to which the men of our day give the name of 'practical,' envelopes and strangles true eloquence in its folds—the finest fruits of the intellect fall ungathered into the bosom of the reaper: no precious bequests are made to future times—the temple of Irish oratory is in ruins—and there is no great architect at hand to repair the once noble structure—none to overawe and break down the universal mediocrity. If you ask any of those practical orators, who see matter of impeachment in a metaphor, and shun a trope as they would a pestilence, why they never try something more than gosling flights—if you tell them that feeling has undergone no revolution—that the heart is as susceptible of being swayed by its emotions now as in times past—they smack their fingers incontinently, and, with a toss of the bag over their shoulders, smile at such absurdities. 'There,' they say, 'is Judge Burton—he led in every case of importance, and you must confess that he was not eloquent. So sinks your marvellous pyramid of fancies!' Now Judge Burton *was* eloquent. They whose delight is in a vague sublimity of sentiment—who pine for the flowers and figures of speech, and believe that to strain the intellect is to expand it, would be disappointed in his plain and unadorned, but transparent and forcible style. That he cultivated none of the gifts of fancy, and had no range of imagination, is at once admitted, but there is a vast difference between the shining and the solid parts of eloquence. His did not break out in sparkles, or come up in bubbles on the surface, but was in its nature calm, deep, and even—ever clear, sometimes cold, but always convincing. He was practical, but in that respect very unlike the sectaries of the new *Stoa*. After first giving the outlines of his argument, which he was accustomed to do, he filled them up with a hand as bold and free as

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Plunkett, and then urged on his way with a fine, simple vigour, and that weighty good sense which disdains to enlarge itself by looming through a fog. Disregarding what we may be allowed to call the *chiaroscuro* of advocacy—for the love of truth was always too strong in him for that of mere effect—he selected the main topics for consideration, worked them up with consummate skill, and conveyed them in chaste, severe language, not a word of which was misplaced or misapplied. Unless when much excited, he was not fluent, and probably he despised that volubility of tongue to which more essential qualities are often sacrificed. When animated, his periods rolled on in rapid succession, sometimes swelling into sublimity, always distinct and pregnant with meaning; but, as if ashamed of such venturous flights, he soon dropped from his elevation, and resumed his habitual course. We dislike the cant of calling very heavy speakers 'Demosthenic,' and very extravagant ones 'Ciceronian.' We, however, after this plea of confession, will stand excused for referring to the former as indicative of the style of Judge Burton, as it once was. Too serious to be witty, too severe to be fanciful, too timid to be passionate, he preferred close and hard reasoning, and worked it through with a quiet, subtle energy. His unobtrusive but earnest manner, masking the most dangerous logic, which rendered everything so wonderfully clear, while it sapped, in the meantime, the foundations of his adversary's argument, and without bustle carried conviction, made him a formidable opponent. He had no misplaced or tawdry ornament, no mawkish or distempered sentiment—all was plain, unaffected common sense, keen dialectics, and knowledge of mankind, which in him was extensive as that of books. A fine philosophical vein often pervaded his language, as, for instance, in the following:

'To subdue the opposition of the people they govern, two modes are only open to the supreme authorities—the armed force, under the control of the executive, and the moral force, inherent in and flowing from the adjudication of courts of justice. A government that relies on physical force must be near its end. If its authority be limited, first insubordination, then anarchy, is the consequence; if it be powerful, its appeal to arms must be frequent—this gives rise to despotism. Thus, a government relying on physical force, whether in activity or inaction, is alike destructive to public liberty. The great object of the law is to interpose a barrier between both; and so universally does mankind confide in the operation of courts of justice, that it yields a ready compliance to the mere shadow of the law, and invests it, as it were, with a bodily influence.'

Again, speaking of the liberty of the press:

'Tribunals may condemn the language in which a thought is conveyed, but the spirit that informs it is too subtle for their authority. The powers of thought do not rely, like those of physical force, on a multitude of men; on the contrary, the smallness of the number by whom a principle is expressed often strengthens its authority. To destroy the liberty of the press is to destroy the liberty of free discourse. Are we prepared to do that?'

As a judge, he fully sustained the high character which he carried with him from the bar. Every sentiment tells us of one incapable of lending himself to injustice. Rich in professional power and knowledge, he also abounds in that calm strength which, in judicial tribunals, finds appropriate utterance in the simplest combinations of the plainest words, and in addressing to every subject a serene and unbiassed judgment. The light of his understanding is a dry light; there is nothing of temper to discolour it, nor of obliquity to pervert it; the rectitude of his judgment is not simply left undisturbed, it is invariably aided by the rectitude of his purpose. His decisions evince all the learning of his profession, and show the thoroughly legal structure of his mind; they are as remarkable for sound reasoning as for profound erudition. His, too, is that wise and wholesome habit which we would wish to see more generally practised by our judges—of preferring substance to technicality, and common reason to common law, where the latter falls short of that absolute perfection with which lawyers so fondly identify it. Not that he determines contrary to the wisdom of our ancestors, or disregards the oracular revealings of such learned apprentices in the law as Masters, Coke, or Plowden; but where natural and artificial right are in opposition, which is but too often the case, he inclines strongly against the latter, and in favour of the former. Whenever the court has a discretion, he exercises it wisely and beneficially. The suitor who has the opinion of Judge Burton against him abandons all hope;—the inscription on the gate of Dante's hell is not more disheartening to those who wend that dismal way, than his decree, or even *dictum*, to those who find their way into the Queen's Bench. In the very heavy case of Smith and Nangle, which turned on the question whether a lost lease, executed a century and a half ago, contained a covenant for perpetual renewal, in an action of ejectment the defendant had a verdict. The case was re-heard last Easter term in the Queen's Bench. Mr. Pennefather, with his usual power, argued two entire days for the defendant. Independently of that hired advocacy which seeks to make the worse appear the better reason, he is known to hold opinions very favourable to his clients; but when Judge Burton pronounced judgment

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for a new trial, in one of the clearest and most convincing pieces of reasoning we ever heard, in which he canvassed the arguments on both sides with the most exquisite discernment, and determined their relative weight and importance, we heard one of Nangle's counsel say, 'It is now time for us to begin to despair, Burton is against us;' to which he added, 'Never was a property so sacrificed to a wretched law quibble.' And we sympathized with his client; for an estate which his family had enjoyed for nearly a hundred and fifty years, and of which there had been frequent renewals by the ancestors of the plaintiff, was to be wrested from him, because an old lost document was supposed not to contain a certain covenant. Such, however, was the law, though nothing could be more abhorrent to natural justice and equity.

A very remarkable feature of Judge Burton's character is the astonishing patience he exhibits. There he takes his seat, day after day, a monument of tranquil and indefatigable justice. The utmost prolixity has not the least effect on his exemplary patience; the dullest argumentation, the most confused and tiresome repetition, the wrangling and recrimination of counsel, cannot exhaust his indulgent forbearance, or embitter the gentleness of his temper. His mind is wholly and absolutely devoted to the matter before the court, and, even for a moment, never strays from it. This ever-wakeful and ever-fixed attention enables him to watch the progress of the case, however involved or intricate, so as to preclude the necessity of much subsequent consideration. Unmoved and passive though he sits, his active discrimination, and close unwearied diligence, continue watchful to the end, and hardy indeed would that adventurer be who would endeavour to impose on so scrutinizing a mind. While the Chief hints his dislike at prolixity by a most expressive cough, or Judge Perrin cuts short the fine-woven thread of an elaborate but inappropriate argument by calling back the advocate to the real question, Judge Burton holds on his course, and listens without a murmur to the most protracted and persecuting discussion. In all matters relating to the common law, his knowledge is always ready, but in the construction of statutes he is somewhat slower in arriving at a conclusion, though his interpretation is marked with equal skill and good sense. This conscientious hesitation touching our legislative puzzles was also characteristic of Lord Coke. 'If you ask,' says he, 'my opinion on any matter pertaining to the common law, I should be ashamed if I did not give you a ready answer; but if it be statute law, I should be equally ashamed if I answered you immediately.' In his judgments he is often prolix and unnecessarily minute. He doubles and redoubles on the same subject, going over the same ground with a repetition which would be tiresome, were it not for the soundness of the knowledge he conveys. This arises not from any present defect in his intellectual constitution, but from his anxiety to take more than the ordinary securities against mistake or error. Another judge would slur over a difficulty with an ambiguous conciseness—he would veil his ignorance of the law or of the facts by saying as little as possible on the subject—he would 'agree in the opinion of his brother this or brother that,' without caring to know whether that opinion was well or ill founded. This mysterious accordance Judge Burton never indulges in, unless where the matter is too clear to admit of a doubt. Applying himself to every view of the case, and investigating with the most careful and scrupulous exactness every principle which it involved, he does not confine himself to mere conclusions, but fully states the reasons through which he arrived at them. He considers the several objections raised on either side, to show that he neither undervalued their strength nor misunderstood their bearing, canvassing them in new and different lights, and assigning to each its proper amount of value. All this gives to his judgments the appearance of 'linked reasoning long drawn out,' which, to one unacquainted with his object—that of giving the fullest satisfaction to the bar—would seem to be a judicial infirmity springing from an inability to collect and condense his thoughts.

Judge Burton is a Tory, but he never mingled in politics when off the bench, and the most desperate malignity could never charge him, when on it, with an undue inclination to one set of political opinions more than another. No man's reason was less swayed by party considerations—and in the many political questions which came before him, none could say with truth that he contemplated any in the spirit of a partizan. Calm, dignified, and impartial, he turned neither to the right nor left in dealing out rigid justice; and as in his younger days he was not of those men, so abundant in our own times, whose patriotism has been only the coquetry of political prostitution, and whose profligacy has taught governments to adopt the old maxim of the slave-market, that it is cheaper to buy than to breed—so in his older days he maintained his independence. The striking contrast between him and some of his brother judges will apologize for the following observations. In a personal sketch like this, such remarks may be deemed out

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of place, but to those who are acquainted with the history and character of the Irish bench in times gone by, and the fatal influence it exercised on the country, such a short digression will seem not only not superfluous, but intimately connected with our design.

The unreasoning violence of faction had long been among the wide-spread and deep-rooted evils which marred the repose of Ireland. Partiality had been so long the rule of government, that one party regarded the opposite principle as a dereliction of duty, while the other contemplated it only with suspicion, instead of hailing it as a blessing. Impartiality was among the unknown virtues of administrative policy, and though one which a government ought eminently to practice, yet was it too sacred for vulgar eyes to be displayed on every paltry occasion which required a fair meting out of justice. Party spirit was also suffered to darken at its source the beneficent fountain of the law, and the people were taught to feel that it was not a friend from which they could obtain aid and redress for injury, but an oppressive enemy. They saw, but too often, that religion and not evidence returned the verdict, and decreed the sentence. That the general bearing of the bench destroyed that public confidence without which the law is a valueless cipher, is but too apparent to any one even remotely conversant with our history. A bitter political tone was the marked characteristic of many of our judges. Overreaching the dry and unexciting boundaries of the law, their minds took a discursive and imaginative flight, and a judicial charge was made the unworthy vehicle of personal feeling and a factious spirit. We speak of a state of things now happily passed away, never more to renew its vicious vitality—we speak of what had been when 'George the Third was king.' Many of those false venders of justice have gone to render an account of their decrees before a higher tribunal. Among the most prominent of the seceders from the one-sided of the bench, Judge Burton was conspicuous. From the very day of his appointment down to the present, the most microscopic eye could not detect the shadow of a stain on his honourable and impartial character. A learned judge, now no more, once gave the following defence of his unquestionable right to talk politics on the seat of judgement, and his indignant depreciation of such narrow-minded functionaries as Judge Burton, who would meanly confine themselves within the stringent confines of the law. 'There are those who would be for abridging the diameter of the judge's sphere—some from a saucy disregard of the judicial character, rank and duties—more from a sense of the importance of the influence of the bench, if not disparagingly interfered with, counteracted, and curtailed. These latter would fain reduce the law to an ignoble craft, or those who dispense it to mere tradesmen. Seated on the bench-board, they would allow them to dispose of suits, or take measure of crimes and misdemeanours, and furnish penalties that should fit. But they must not dilute their black-letter with the spirit of philosophy or sense. They must be journeymen and servile plodders, lest they should do the state some service, by entering on the more dignified functions of a master mind.' Judge Burton formed a very different opinion of the character and importance of the judicial duties—he thought, and not very unreasonably, that the judgment-seat should stand far above the contention of parties, and that it was not inconsistent with the spirit of truth, sense, or justice, to reduce the law to the ignoble craft of merely administering its maxims, without diluting it with philosophy or any other extraneous substance. One instance will show the firmness of his conduct, and the high and impartial tone which ever characterized him. In 1832 a body of Orangemen in Cavan marched in procession to commemorate the Boyne anniversary. As usual, they carried muskets and banners, and headed by a band of music playing inflammatory airs, they had the audacity to march by the Court-house, in which, at that moment, the Judges were engaged! Startled by the shouting, a police-officer was sent by them to divert the procession, but the loyalists laughed at the mandate, and passed on in triumph in the sight and hearing of the first magistrates of the law. Bad example is contagious. Emboldened by the impunity of their adversaries, some days after a party of Roman Catholics marched with their flags and fire-arms. They were indicted for a violation of the Party Processions Act, and at the ensuing assizes 'true bills' were found against them. A complaint was forwarded to the lord-lieutenant that the magistrates refused to take informations against the Orangemen for the same offence, and it was directed that they should be taken. The trials were postponed until the next assizes, when the Catholics who had committed the offence, but against whom the bills were first found, were all found guilty; the Orangemen were, of course, immediately acquitted. So much for the justice of the jury—now for that of the judge. When the Catholics were called up for judgment, Judge Burton said, he could not shut his eyes to the glaring fact, that the offence had been provoked by the conduct of the Orangemen, and was intended as an imitation of it. He thereupon discharged the

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prisoners, on their entering into their own security to appear and receive the sentence of the court, whenever they should be called on to do so. They were afterwards fined some small sum and discharged. In England, no notice would be taken of such judicial impartiality, but in Ireland it is chronicled in the hearts of the people: they look on it as a great effort of magnanimity—as a thing strange and unaccountable, that the laws should be dispensed fairly, freely, and impartially. Purity has ceased to be a miracle, hut Judge Burton was pure when even justice was a banned principle—and the Bench acted on the prudential policy of the slave in *Terence*, '*Huic habeo, non tibi.*'

Like all great minds, he is simple, natural, and amiable; full of humane and kindly affections; in whom the finest feelings of our nature are blended with that firmness of purpose and unrelaxed sincerity of principle, which are often found incompatible with the attributes of a gentle and tender heart. Judges are only men, notwithstanding all the artificial dignity and severity of their office. They, too, have their passions and emotions, and it would be strange if they had not; though many assume an unnatural and unbecoming austerity, and look on with a proud inflexibility—with the true Rhadamanthine air of men who cannot, *virtute officii*, have any sympathy with suffering, just as if an indulgence in the most creditable impulses of human nature would lower the majesty of the ermine. This may be very judicial, but it is not very humane. Judge Burton is not of this insensible class. On the trial of some persons in Tipperary for the burning of the Sheas, one of the most dismal occurrences in the history of crime, he presided. In alluding to the state of the calendar, he remarked, with tears in his eyes, that he never heard or read of anything more truly pitiable than the fate of that unfortunate family; and in the progress of the trial, when the facts appeared in evidence, narrated with a touching simplicity by one of the friends of the deceased, the humane judge sobbed like a child. To this virtuous and manly display of feeling, Mr. Shiel afterwards, in his speech for the defence, made an allusion which produced a very deep impression on the audience. Like Baron Smith, he is most reluctant to pass sentence of death, and in every case where the circumstances approximate to anything like a justification for leniency, he recommends to mercy. We conclude our sketch in the language of Addison on another great lawyer, which is peculiarly applicable to Mr. Justice Burton. 'His life was in every part of it set off with that graceful modesty and reserve, which made his virtues more apparent the more they were cast in such agreeable shades. His great humanity appeared in the minutest circumstances. You found it in the benevolence of his aspect, the complacency of his behaviour, and the tone of his voice. His great application to the severer studies of the law had not infected his temper with anything positive or litigious; he did not know what it was to wrangle on indifferent points, or triumph in the superiority of his understanding. His character was uniform and consistent with itself—and his whole conduct was of a piece. His principles were founded on reason, and his notions were no less steady and unshaken than just and upright; and that unwearied diligence which followed him through all the stages of his life, gave him such a profound insight into the laws of the land, that even from his first appearance in it he passed for one of the greatest masters in it.'

'HOPE ON, HOPE EVER.'

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

AH! that will she, 'hope on, hope ever.'—
'Tis woman's nature! what can sever
The hope that springeth fresh and green
Rath from her heart? though oft is seen
Threat'ning to blight its blossoms *there*,
The fierce sirocco of despair,
It can but blast with partial pow'r
The imperishable flower!

'Hope on, hope ever,'—yes, when woe
Teaches the heart, alas! to know
All is not cloudless in the sky
That love paints to the young bride's eye,
That sorrow dims its sun awhile,
And *many* tears succeed *one* smile,
Still looks she to a hand on high,
'A helping hand,' those tears to dry!

'Hope on, hope ever'—oh! the same
When fever, with devouring flame,
Prostrates the babe she thought in love
Had been sent to her from above.
God searcheth that sad heart, and sees
Submission to his dread decrees;
Lo! in his breast compassion waxeth,
And he the bow of death relaxeth.

'Hope on, hope ever'—when at last
Earth's 'bridge of sighs' is safely past,
Then hope its primal tints resume,
Verdant in amaranthine bloom;
The hope the chasten'd Christian feels
When Heaven's Majesty revcals
To the initiated eye
The glories of eternity!

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SPENCER MIDDLETON; OR, THE SQUIRE OF RIVER HILL.

BY GEORGE STANLEY, ESQ.

CHAPTER V.

The heir and his adviser—The Will—Robbery and death.

In a street in one of the lowest parts of Westminster, where cheap sprats and old clothes seemed the staple commodities, and shoes and stockings were certainly at a discount, a dark swarthy man, with deep black eyes, unwashed skin, and tangled hair, might be seen leaning out of a first-floor window of a house, over the door of which was the name of 'Moses Levi, dealer in old clothes.' 'Twas a miserable room that, from the window of which the man leaned; not unfurnished, indeed, but so dirty and ill-sorted that it readily declared itself to be the abode of successful villany. There was no lack of things, but all was negligence and dirt, demonstrative of that narrow tenure which its present owner considered he had of his present abode; for though he lacked not the wherewith to live and spend, he knew not at what hour the prying eye of justice might startle him from his hiding-place, and force him to fly even to greater obscurity, filth, and wretchedness, than was now around. By the fire, for it was a raw November day, sat a fair girl, about eighteen years of age, of slight and elegant proportions; care had worn her young features, and sharpened the expression of her face, but yet there was much that remained of delicacy, of sweetness of expression. It was now getting dark.

'Mary,' said the young man, as he bent into the room without quitting the window, 'the time? quick, girl, quick!'

'Past five, George,' replied the girl, after referring to an old watch which lay on the table.

'Past five, and Mark not back!' muttered George, as he turned away from the window, and paced anxiously across the room; 'three hours—three hours, and not here!'

'Dearest George,' said the girl, walking towards him, and laying her hand on his shoulder.

'Well, girl, can I not be at peace even here?'

'Dearest, you are angered!'

'Well, and if I am—Ha! I hear his step,' said the man, suddenly breaking away, and rushing to the door. 'Girl, go; leave us.' As the girl obeyed, the noise of a man's footstep was heard on the creaking stair.

'Well, Mark?' said the young man, as a broad-shouldered man, of most unprepossessing appearance, strode into the room, and threw himself with such violence on a chair as to make it creak again.

'Well, squire,' said Mark, 'you seem in a flummux.'

'Is the old man dead?' inquired George.

'Dead! not he: he'll see you d—d first, and not then;' and the brute laughed at his own joke.

The young man swore fearfully.

'That's right, squire; d—n your old uncle for not dying when he's told,' chuckled his companion. 'Don't spare him; he don't deserve it.'

'Is he worse?'

'No, better,' replied Mark; 'doctor says he'll live a week.'

'A week! a week!' muttered the nephew.

'Ay, a veek, squire; sha'n't us be rich then?'

'We shall be starved,' said the young man. 'Mark, there's my last shilling.'

'And there's my last tanner,' replied Mark, throwing the money on the table. 'Vy don't you call things by their right names? Come, come, squire, sit ye down and hear the news.'

His companion obeyed him with reluctance.

'Vell, you see, squire, I vent as usual to the old un's to see Missus Martha; old Sammy said as how she couldn't come, cause vy, master vanted her, so had sent a paper; now read that ere, and tell us how you likes it,' said Mark, as he held out a crumpled paper to his companion, on which was written,

'The old un's better, and ain't going to go not at all yet; made his vill last night. Look alive like.—M.'

George turned deadly pale as he read it, and remained silent some time; at last he asked,

'Is this true, Mark!'

'Ay, squire, it be true as you're alive.'

'Then I am indeed ruined,' gasped George.

'Ruined! ho, ho! think of that. Steady, steady, squire; don't walk so vicious. I goes avay, and says to Sammy, "Come agin in haff an hour." Vell, back I comes; "vell," says she, "here's a go; who'd a thought it? I heard him this wery blessed last night as is past, through the keyhole—a hundred shiners for the squire—"'

'Ah!' ejaculated George.

'"And his curse." Ah, squire; "and all the rest to the old un and young un in the country." Now don't valk so hard, squire, you puts me out.'

George reseated himself, looking moodily

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at the fire, and swaying backwards and forwards on his chair.

'"Vell," says I, "Martha, who made vill?" "Lawyer," says she. "Who witnessed it." "Cork, and Samson, and I," says she. "How's old un?" says I; "better," says she. "Sleep vell?" says I. "Tol-lol," says she. "Try little lodinum," says I? "han't none," says she.'

'Confound you,' shouted his companion, 'what on earth has all this trash to do with me?'

'Vait and see, as the man said to his friend ven he was agoing to be scrag'ed; Tothill-fields vornt built in a day. Would you believe it, squire, that I had a bottle of that ere stuff in my pocket just handy? "How much?" says she; "Two teaspoons," says I. "Samson heavy sleeper, eh?" "Werry," says she—now don't flurry, squire —"snores like vinkin in the back kitchen," says she. "Dangerous!" says I. "How?" says she. "Vy, I dare to say you sleeps uncommon hard, and aney von might come and half murder you all, and you be no chalk the wiser for it; or might go nigh for to bind you all, and then valk off vith the old un's vill and his ready." "Let um try," says she, as she valk'd off a laffing. Now, squire, do you take, eh?'

'I think I do, Mark,' replied his comrade, with a melancholy smile; 'but still—I've had enough of that work; I'll e'en take my legacy and be content.'

'Ah, and list for a lobster, and get a tissy a day and your corn,' said Mark, with a sneer.

'Honesty's the best policy, Mark, after all,' said George.

'Ah,' replied the man, 'so the beak said, 'cause vy, he'd tried 'em both. Lookee, squire, you and I have done a thing or two together, and you can't say but I've stood for ye like a man. Now if you go nigh for to turn good, so'll I; 'cause vy, honesty's the best policy.'

'Mark, you shall have the legacy; I owe it you for all you have done for me,' said the squire.

'O do'ce, vell, let's see; two hundred shiners offered for the put-up at Clapham—ditto ditto for the lark at Vestminster—don't make such faces, squire—three ditto for the little affair at Deal—two and two is four, and three is seven. No, squire, honesty's the best policy after all—them there rewards is vorth having.'

'Villain! would you sell me?' said George, starting from his seat.

'Vy, you sees, squire, honesty's the best policy,' replied Mark, with great coolness.

'Villain, I'll shoot you on the spot,' said the squire, drawing a pistol from his vest.

'Wery vell, squire, and then my mate Philip vill just know vot for to do.'

'Philip! how, Philip?'

'Vy, you sees, squire, I alvays told all about the matters to my mate, 'cause vy, I thought, if squire ever cuts up rough, von of us vill go to the vall.'

'Villain!' muttered George.

'That's right, squire, abuse avay like vinking.'

'Well, well, Mark, I was only joking; let's hear your plan. Come, old boy, don't desert me now,' said George, trying to smooth down Mark's cool anger.

'Vell, squire, that'll do, that'll do; a little talk goes a great vay vith me, 'cause vy, I never believes none of it. Now, squire, if that old un's vill vas no go, vot's you vorth?'

'Twenty thousand a year, at least,' replied George.

'Werry good; twenty thousand shiners a year. Vell, you shall sign a bond to give me one thousand shiners a year, and I'll take care the old un's vill is no go.'

'It is a long sum, Mark; what would you do with so much money?' replied George.

'Vell, vell, squire,' honesty's the best policy; the seven 'undred pounds vill do werry vell,' replied his adviser.

'Villain!' muttered George. 'Well, Mark, I agree; give me the bond, and I'll sign.'

'Vell, squire, isn't it odd? here's the werry ticket, 'xcept the names,' replied Mark, as he dived into his coat-pocket, and extracted a deed ready drawn; 'let's put in the names, squire. Let's see; "I, George Middleton, late of Riverley, &c., out of love and affection"—that'll do, squire?' George assented; '"and in consideration of the many acts of service and kindness performed by my dear friend, Mark Redmond, as well to myself as to my dear uncle, Aubrey Middleton, of Riverley, &c."—will that do, squire? "out of love and affection,"—bah, had that before, —"do grant to the said Mark Redmond an annuity of one thousand pounds for and during his natural life, charged and chargeable on all the real estate which may at any time belong to me;" then there's the usual gab about payment, and then comes signing. Hilloa, Moses!'

'Vell, share,' squeaked the Jew from below; 'vhat you vant there?'

'Come up here, old rags and tatters,' replied Redmond. 'Moses,' he continued, as the Jew entered, 'what kind of a witness are you now?'

'Vare goot, share, still; vare goot, indeed, share.'

'Vell now, squire, down with your name;

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now, Moses, look sharp. "I give this as my act and deed." Very well, squire: now, Moses, down with your fist—all right. Now away, Moses, and send up some brandy. Honesty's the best policy, aint it, Moses? hey, squire?'

'Dependsh on shircumstanches, share; vere your monish, share, for de prandee?' replied the Jew.

'There, catch, you money-getting old Jew, and be quick,' shouted Mark, as he flung his last shilling with such a good aim, that the Jew declared he never found money so hard before.

As soon as the liquor was obtained, Mark laid himself upon three chairs, bid the squire be easy and at home, and, lighting his short pipe—an old favourite of Mark's—looked serious and sentimental. George seemed still uneasy and unsettled. He had evidently been fighting a hard battle with himself, and been actually driven into the present plan through the dark hints of his companion. He knew too well how completely he was in the hands of Mark, but he had hoped until that last conversation, that to him alone his share in those fatal and dangerous expeditions had been known.

Mark's pipe had now been glowing and smoking nearly two hours, the liquor was drained to the last drop, and night had set in with the utmost obscurity.

'Past nine, by the living jingo, squire. Come, we must be off,' said Mark, suddenly kicking away one of his three chairs, and standing on his feet. 'It will take us nigh on to an hour, and more, to work up to the old un's; and old Sammy turns in to snore at ten precisely, so we'll catch him in his first nap. Now, then — von jemmy, von darky, von nicker, von gag — no, two gags, —and a pair of barkers. Now, you sees, squire, the vill is laid up all snug in that ere borow, as they calls it; vell, in ve gets, gags old Sammy, to save noise, valks up stairs and does ditto to old Martha, to save 'pearances; you vatches the old un vile I grabs the vill, and then avay ve goes, and who's the viser?'

'But, Mark, should my uncle awake, all our trouble will be in vain—a sheet of paper and a pen soon make a new will,' replied the squire.

'And suppose he don't, and the lodinum does its duty, he vont be not von touch the viser—vil he, squire?' inquired his companion.

At last the friends departed towards the old man's house.

'Martha,' said the old man, 'Martha, I cannot sleep; horrid dreams haunt me; I fear I have but a short time to live; 'tis horrid, this waking vision. O God, help me,' murmured the old man, 'why did I let my brother leave me?'

'Dear master, you have a good conscience; you have done your duty to your relations; why fear? why tremble so violently?' replied his nurse.

'My relations! Ah, Spencer! Spencer! would to God I had lived thy life. Brother! brother! is it you?—No, 'tis George—'tis a priest. Away! away!—I cannot, I dare not pray,' gasped poor Aubrey, as visions of the past flitted across his brain.

'Drink this, good master,' replied his nurse, as she handed him a draught; ''twill bring sleep—deep sleep;' and then she muttered to herself, 'Was it two spoonfuls Mark said?—ay, two—'tis enough.'

Aubrey had hardly taken the potion ere its effects began to show themselves on his weak frame, and a deep but fretful sleep fell upon him.

'He sleeps,' muttered Martha, as she bent over the bed. ''Tis time now, Master Mark —let's see who plans best. I know your hints about robberies. Come, I can but fail, after all. What! not pick a lock, Martha? —no, no, who'd believe that? the neatest filch and quickest eye in all St. Giles's could not pick a lock!' she continued muttering to herself, as she approached the bureau wherein the will was locked. The false key was applied, and the lock yielded; her hand was on the deed itself in its parchment cover; she stopped and listened; a scraping noise, as of a small saw, arrested her attention; she listened—'Quick, Martha, quick,' she said, 'they come.—Ay, too late, Master Mark,' continued the crone, as she extracted the will from its envelope, and filled up the vacancy with an old newspaper, carefully refolding the parcel, and restoring it to its original form. This done, she relocked the bureau, and, having concealed the document about her person, cowered down before the fire in her nursing-chair, as if overcome from fatigue and watching.

She had hardly completed her operations ere Mark and George pushed open the chamber-door, and crept stealthily into the sick man's room. Still pretending not to awake, she permitted the squire to place a gag in her mouth, and pinion her to her chair, seeming to be but half conscious of what was being done to her, or too terrified to permit her to utter a word.

George now proceeded to his uncle's bedside, and stood watching the old man as he lay in his deep but restless sleep, totally unconscious of their presence, and seemingly in that state of exhaustion which generally precedes death.

The bureau was soon opened; the packet,

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with its alluring endorsement, deposited in Mark's pocket, along with a few stray pieces of gold, which, their captor remarked, might be useful, and would not be in the way; the lock was closed, and all had assumed the appearance of security, when footsteps were heard on the stairs, and, the door being suddenly burst open, Samson, whom they left bound and gagged below, sprang into the room, and fastened on the squire. At the same time, two other men tried to seize Redmond. The latter soon found that the thief was too much even for numbers, and were glad to take the excuse of two knock-down blows, which sent one assailant with his forehead against the corner of the bureau, and his companion head-foremost down stairs, as good excuses for no further interference. George, unprepared for the attack, had been thrown by his assailant across the sick man, over whom he now struggled violently with his opponent. Samson, always a strong, powerful man, seemed nerved with additional strength, and for a time kept the squire beneath him. Ere, however, Mark could come to his companion's aid, the scene was changed; by a dexterous turn, George had gained the uppermost place, whilst his assailant clutched violently at his dress to keep him from rising. The sudden report of a pistol startled Mark, as he hurried towards the scene of the struggle, and Samson fell back a dead man over his master's body. In the violent clutchings which he had made at the squire's dress, he had accidentally sprung the lock of a pistol concealed in his assailant's pocket; the ball had passed along George's arm, leaving a deep groove, and entered the poor fellow's breast.

The squire and Redmond, now everything seemed quiet, fled from the house, pursued only by those terrors which that night's deed had fixed even on the hardened mind of the latter. As for human aid, there was none; the accidental passing of two labouring men, who were attracted by the open door and the subdued moans of the servant as he lay bound, had occasioned the release, the interruption, and the death. Another victim had been sacrificed to the king of terrors during that struggle. The old man had awoke, when the combatants fell across his bed, in that half-conscious state which opiate causes even in the strong man's brain, he fell a fall, he saw a confused mingling of limbs, and heard blows and curses around him. He tried to cry out, but his weakness prevented him; again he looked—yes, 'twas his brother's face—that brother who had drawn him into all his errors. He once or twice muttered 'George,' and died ere his faithful servant fell dead across his master's body.

FORTY-ONE TONS OF INDIGO. OR, THE CAREFUL DEALER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'RATLIN THE REEFER,' 'THE OLD COMMODORE,' 'JACK ASHORE,' &c.

Let us begin with a maxim. Though such a commencement may a little startle the mere amusement seeker, we must disregard his very natural fear of being instructed for the sake of the imposing air that it gives to the article. 'In matters of business, if you can help it, as far as possible never commit yourself by speaking first, and on no account commit yourself by speaking hastily.'

We have propounded our aphorism, and we now proceed to prove its value by the narrative of a fact, which, should it read a little like a tale, we shall not be sorry for, but merely plume ourselves upon the attractive manner in which we have related it. It is not our fault if we be naturally eloquent. But this will not make us vain, for we have much greater sins than eloquence to answer for.

Men with linen aprons before them have sometimes very creditable feelings, and a coat out at the elbows may often be buttoned over a generous breast. It may be even suspected that maidens with serge gowns on their backs may have their susceptibilities, though I know these latter have been shamefully monopolized by young ladies who are votaries to the excitements of elegant fiction.

If the above propositions can be tolerated by the reader, let him read on, and know that the hero of this little moral sketch was a douce and canny Scot, making up, by their great variety, for the limited extent of his dealings. He was a chapman in a promiscuous line. In fact—why should we attempt to disguise the truth?—he kept what in London would be called a chandler's shop.

He condescended, merely for the convenience of his immediate neighbours, to sell candles so low as a farthing apiece—indeed he would, for the nonce, furnish light so attenuated that you might purchase two for a farthing, and yet he had small beer in his emporium more attenuated still. He also sold dying materials, among which I might have classed his small ale, and he had coculus indicus to set off against a halfpenny's worth of salt, barilla against two sheets of parliament cake for a baubee, and indigo by the pound against snuff by the half ounce.

Indeed, our trustworthy friend, Donald M'Grie, had no small pride in his shop; and the street in which he lived in the gude auld town of Aberdeen, had just so much pride in Donald. Really Donald was a safe chiel; he kept his accounts accurately, both with

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God and man, for he was as punctual at kirk as in his payments, and, as he allowed no long scores with his neighbours, he took care never to run largely in debt by crimes of omission, which must be some day settled before a tribunal so awful.

Having thus sufficiently described Donald's circumstances, we must now proceed to narrate the first grand step that he made towards acquiring the splendid fortune that he so well deserved, and lived so long to enjoy.

He was out of indigo; that is to say, all the indigo that he lately had, had gone out from his warehouse by driblets. Thereupon he writes a letter to the house in London, a drysalter's in the most extensive line of business, ordering 'forty-one pons weight of indigo,' stating at the same time, that if there was not a vessel, they must '*get ane.*' Such were the exact words he used.

Now, at the time this occurred, communication between Aberdeen and London was rare, and, at farthest, four times in the year was the utmost extent that Donald M'Grie and his wholesale dealers addressed each other. These latter were very much surprised at the extent of the order, and the reader will not wonder at it when he is informed that they never could suppose for a moment that a vessel could be ordered on purpose to carry forty-one pounds of indigo; so, after much scrutiny of the very hieroglyphical marks of M'Grie, all the heads of the firm took it firmly into their said heads that their correspondent had fairly written for forty-one tons.

They knew but very little of the man, and of the nature and extent of his business; all however, that they did know was most satisfactory; they had done business with him for nearly twenty years, and had, during all that time, been extremely well pleased with the punctuality of his payments, added to which, they had heard that he was wealthy. Upon all these grounds, they without hesitation, executed the order; but, as they had not anything like the quantity on hand, they were themselves forced to become purchasers, in order to fulfil the commission. Having collected the quantity that they supposed that Donald had specified, they shipped it for Aberdeen, sending with it an invoice, and also a bill of lading by post.

When M'Grie received this precious bill of lading his astonishment was at once ludicrous and stupendous. At length, in order to give himself a little mental relief, he determined to set it down as a hoax, for, said he, 'What on earth can the people of London mean by sending me forty-one tons of indigo?' It was more than sufficient, with the then consumption, to supply Aberdeen for a gude Scotch generation—twenty-one years. However, his prudence still prevailed over every other operation of his mind.

Like a canny Scot, he kept his perplexity to himself, for nothing was farther from his thoughts than to run hither and thither with his mouth open, and the letter in his hand, in order to tell his tale of wonder, and excite the stupid exclamations of his neighbours. Notwithstanding this stoical conduct, he could not so far command his deportment, but that those about him remarked a definite, though a mysterious change in his whole man. He was nearly silent; but the activity of his feet made up for the idleness of his tongue. He was fidgetty, repeatedly leaving his shop without any conceivable reason, and then returning to it hastily on the same rational grounds. For once in his life, his neighbours thought that wily Donald did not very well know what he was about.

In the midst of this agitation, time and tide, which wait for no man, brought the vessel that bore the indigo to Aberdeen. It would seem that, in order to quicken Donald's apprehension, she had an extraordinary quick passage. No sooner was she moored, than the captain hastened to find the merchant to whom this large and valuable cargo was consigned. Having gone previously to the very first merchants, he, by nice gradations, at length arrived at the little shop of the actual consignee, honest Donald M'Grie. Indeed, the skipper was as much astonished at the minuteness of the warehouse as M'Grie had been at the magnitude of his cargo, for that warehouse, had it contained nothing else, would not have held the one-fifth part of the consignment.

After the few first introductory sentences, that made each aware of what was their mutual business, the captain became convinced that all was right from the quiet conduct of Donald, who betrayed neither emotion nor surprise, though at the same time his very heart was melting within him, as melts an exposed rushlight on a sunshiny summer's day.

'And sae, sir, ye'll be sure ye a brought the tottle of the forty-one tons. A hugeous quantity, eh, sir! And did ye ever ken any one mon hae sae mickle before?'

'Never, Mr. M'Grie, never. Why, sir, do you know that the difficulty of getting all the indigo together had an effect on the market. It was full three farthings the pound dearer on 'Change the very day I left London.'

'O, ay—purely. It was—was it? Now I'll just put ye ane case—not that it is o' the slightest consequence, but merely to satisfy my conjecture—supposing, mon, ye had all this indigo, what would ye just do wi' it?'

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'Why,' said the skipper, 'I should not have bought it unless I wanted it; and if I had wanted it, I should have known what to do with it. That is, Mr. M'Grie, precisely your case.'

'Ah weel, my mon, but you're an unco cannie chiel. Do you na ken whether his precious majesty, may God bless him, aint gaun to make the volunteer laddies wear blue regimentals—blue is a pure standing colour.'

'Why, I don't know, but some report of that sort may be stirring; for what with your large demand, and other matters, indigo is certainly getting up. But my time is precious. Here's your bill of lading, so just sign my papers—ah, all right—when and where shall I discharge the cargo?'

'Don't fash yourself, there's nae hurry. I'll just speak to two or three of my worshipfu' correspondents, and let you know on the morrow, or aiblins the next day after. I may hae to send to Edinbro' anent the matter.'

'Ah, yes, I understand, a joint consignment. It won't prove a bad speculation, I'm thinking. Morning, morning, Mr. M'Grie.'

So away trudged the skipper, leaving the owner of much indigo in a state of doleful perplexity, such as ought not to befall any honest man. All that night he kept exclaiming, 'Gude Lord, gude Lord, what shall I do with all this indigo? Na, na, Donald will not commit himself. But it's a mickle heap.'

Very early was Donald abroad the next morning, inquiring of everybody all the possible uses to which indigo could be put. He got but very little satisfaction on this point. He began himself to look dark blue. He had almost resolved upon a journey to London, awful as it appeared to him, to have this mistake explained, but he still resolved to wait a little, and to do nothing in a hurry.

The next thing that happened to Donald, with his forty-one tons of dye, was his sad reflections when an old woman came and bought of him one farthing's worth of stone blue.

'Had ye na better try indigo, my gude frien'?' says Donald to the old washerwoman quite pawkily.

'And what think ye, gude mon M'Grie, I'll be doing with indigo in the suds? Oot awa, mon, but yer gaffing a puir old body.' So off the old lady trudged with a damaged temper.

'Had I but sold a farthing's worth o' this dommed indigo, 'twould have been a beginning. Had the auld washer bodies hae taken to it! and every little helps.'

About this time, as the skipper who had just brought the indigo was just passing the principal inn of Aberdeen, he observed a post-chaise and four, with the horses all foam, stop with a most imposing jerk at the door, and the managing and confidential clerk of the firm of Hubbens, Hobbins, and Robins, the eminent drysalters. The clerk almost flew into the arms of the skipper, and with breathless eagerness asked him if he had delivered the indigo to Donald M'Grie?

'No. It is still in the vessel, but he has the manifest and the bill of sale.'

'Then the property is now vested in him?'

'As securely as the hair upon your own head is your own property. He seems cautious even for a Scotchman.'

'Is he in a large line of business?'

'I can't really say that. We should call his place of trade nothing better than a chandler's shop in London. But they manage things in another guess way here.'

'What can he possibly want with this indigo? He has actually drained the market, and we have just received advices that all the crops of indigo have failed in the West Indies. There is also a large demand for it from government, and it is now actually worth its weight in gold.'

'You don't say so. Why, he was saying something like it. No doubt but that some West Indiaman has made the run by herself, and reached this place without waiting for convoy, and brought the news of the failure of the crops. Besides, he talked largely about his correspondents.'

'And I am losing all this precious time! Where does he live? I know nothing about the place.'

'I will go with you, if you choose. I should like to see how the douce Scot manages it.'

'No, good captain. Just show me the door. If I prosper, you will just have to take the stuff back to London.'

'So I thought. But mind your bearings and distance with M'Grie. He is an overcautious tradesman.'

It had been a dull morning with Donald. He had sold a little snuff and a little sand, a little cheese, and a half-score of ballads for a half-penny, but not a particle of indigo, and no more stone or powdered blue. He was never known to give such short weight. He had wrangled awfully with his few customers, and was, altogether, in a very misty humour.

'I would just gie twa punds Scotch to get out of this scrape, and some odd siller over;' and as he thus exclaimed aloud, he struck the pound of butter that he was making up with his wooden paddles a blow so spiteful, that it resounded like the report of a pistol.

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At this moment the clerk entered. He paused for a space just within the threshold, scornfully surveyed the shop and its contents, looked with an air that was not far short of contempt on its proprietor, and immediately settled in his mind his plan of action. He was something of the *petit maître*, so he placed his white cambric handkerchief before his nose and mouth, and then jerking it away, exclaimed, 'Faugh!' taking from his waistcoat pocket a smelling-bottle, which, like Shakspeare's popinjay,

> 'Ever and anon he gave to his nose,
> And took't away again.'

But it was Donald who,

> 'Being angry when it next came there,
> Took it in snuff.'

'What would ye please to buy, honest man?' said Donald, pettishly.

'Buy, my good fellow, buy? Does any one ever buy anything here? You will pardon me, but the stench is intolerable.'

'Ye fause young callant! Here be naething but wholesome smells, such as sic puir thread-paper bodies as your ainself might grow sleek upon. An ye no like the odour, healthfu' as it be, twist round yer ugly snout, and there lies the doorway. So tramp, ye ne'er-do-weel.'

'Pardon me. I am sure, sir, that I did not come to quarrel with you, but merely to rectify a mistake. I believe I am speaking to Mr. M'Grie—Mr. Donald M'Grie?'

'Ye don't lee, *noo*,' said Donald, very moodily.'

'I wish to release you from a great deal of uneasiness, in making right this little mistake of yours.'

'And pray where may ye come from?'

'London, Mr. M'Grie, the centre of the arts, the seat of sovereignty, the emporium of the world—but that is nothing here nor there—I come from London, Mr. M'Grie.'

'And how might ye a' made this long journey? Aiblins by the slow waggon?'

'It is you that are slow, my good sir,' said the clerk, flourishing his handkerchief tastefully. 'Chaise and four—spanked along—astonished the natives—never lost a moment, I assure you.'

'Ye'll be making a long stay, nae doubt, in bonny Aberdeen?'

'Not a moment after I've rectified this little mistake. Southward ho! That's the word!'

'So,' thought Donald, 'this spruce young chap is come, I'm sure, about the indigo. I'll save my two punds Scots and the odd siller. He did not travel post for nothing. I shall be clear of my bargain free. But let us not be in a hurry.'

'Ye are come to Aberdeen about the indigo, doubtless?' said Donald, after a pause, and very deliberately.

'Yes. My principals feel sure that you have made a trifling mistake in the amount of your order; so, to relieve your anxiety, they have sent me down to you, to say that they are willing to take the indigo back, and release you from your bargain, provided that you will pay the expense of the freight—and a very generous offer it is, I can tell you.'

'I am sure that I am over obliged to the gude gentlemen. But pray, sir, who may ye be yer ainsel'? A modest young man, nae doubt, but humble—yer preferment's all to come. One would just like to know whom one is treating wi'—some junior clerk, or, perhaps, one of the warehousemen?—surely ye no be ane of the porters?'

Very indignant indeed was the fop at these degrading conjectures. With much hauteur he exclaimed, 'I must acquaint you that I am the confidential principal and managing director of the firm's vast mercantile operations; that I am a near relation of Mr. Hubbens, the head of the firm; and that I have full power and authority to do just what I please in this, as in every other transaction. My name, sir, is Daniel Hubbens, at your service. What do you say to my offer?'

'I should like to glance at your authority—no offence.'

Mr. Daniel Hubbens was offended, however; but, finding the Scotchman firm, he was obliged to give him the necessary vouchers that he was empowered to treat with him for a re-sale of the merchandise. The examination of this document still further opened the eyes of M'Grie to the value of his late purchase, and he consequently became more dogged and consequential.

Mr. Hubbens, perceiving the turn that affairs were likely to take, and that he had a difficult task to perform, at once altered the loftiness of his manner, and said,

'Well, well, my dear sir, the fact is, you have long bought from us. I wish now to see if we, our very respectable firm, cannot purchase from you. So come down to my inn, and we'll talk the matter over the bottle of the best you can call for.'

'Ou, there's nae occasion; just say a' here.'

'No, no, my dear sir; come with me you must. I am very tired, and the best supper that Aberdeen can produce is providing for us two.'

'Sae ye are prepared for me. I understand. Ye would nae hae ta'en all this troublous wark for little. I'll awa with you, my man.'

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And away they both went; in the short journey to the inn Donald cogitating on the utmost that he should ask for the re-sale of the indigo, and the managing clerk endeavouring to divert his thoughts from the value of the goods in his possession.

The supper and its accessories were the best that ever fell to the lot of Donald to share; but he was prudent, and the clerk gained no advantage through the means of his lavish expenditure of choice wines, so, after many flourishes, and much circumlocution, he was forced to put the plain question to his guest, 'What will you take to pass your cargo of indigo back to our firm?'

'Troth, Mr. Hubbens, I'm at a loss a bit. Phat will ye gie, truly?'

'Why, Mr. M'Grie, the fact is, we have received a very unexpected order for the article, and our people have empowered me to come to Aberdeen and offer you a thousand pounds to return the cargo just as you got it. There is a glorious chance for you! A thousand pounds! Don't you feel yourself in heaven?'

'No, no; I'm better advised than that comes to. I didna buy the mickle lot but upon sound calculations. I have friens, sir, friens who have the first intelligence.'

It is as I suspected, thought the clerk; he has had the first news of the general failure of the crops.

'I'll tell you what it is, Mr. M'Grie—it is a bold step, but I'll take it upon myself to double the offer. Two thousand, sir, two thousand! Hey!'

'Indeed no, my man. I can make mair o't than that.'

'Well, I must let you keep it,' said the youngster, with an air of well-affected indifference.

'Weel, weel, young sir, here's to yer verra gude health, and a pleasant journey back again.'

'Thank you, sir. May the indigo prosper with you!'

They drank two glasses of wine each in silence. The mortification of Hubbens could not be concealed, whilst M'Grie's visage represented content carved out in stone.

After a considerable pause, the clerk lost his temper entirely—his patience had long gone before it—and he resumed the attack upon the imperturbable Donald. At length the would-be purchaser, not at all liking the prospect and the shame of an unsuccessful journey back to his principals, in a fit of desperation pulled out his private instructions, and said, 'Here, read that, obstinate man of iron that you are. Just so far am I permitted to go, and no farther.'

M'Grie read very deliberately that his host was empowered to offer him the freight both ways, and four thousand pounds.

'It is driving me hard,' said Donald; 'but as you are an unco amiable young man, and no to fash you with your employers, gude men, I'll just consent. And to show ye that I can be liberal too, why, when ye hae settled the reckoning, I'll stand a pint o' Glenlivet atween the twa of us.'

After this, the transaction was immediately wound up, and the money paid down.

Donald M'Grie took this accession of fortune coolly and temperately. He reflected that men make a thousand unlucky for one lucky mistake, and that cargoes of indigo don't always quadruple themselves in price when bought by misadventure. Reflecting upon all this, he resolved at this, the proper season, to retire from business. So he made over his stock in trade and his house to his nephew—'*for a consideration*,' of course—and bought the lands of C—— C——, which said estate is, at this moment, worth five times the money paid for it.

We have made out our case, and that by the means of no fiction. It well exemplifies our moral, 'In matters of moment, never speak first, and never speak hastily.' In the lives of the most unfortunate among us, many lucky opportunities occur. It is neither the learned nor the clever who know best how to seize them, and to turn them to the most advantage. This faculty belongs to the prudent. Had Donald M'Grie spoken first, and spoken the wish of his heart, he would have said, 'Pray take fifty pounds, and release me from my bargain.' He held his tongue until it was a proper time to speak, and thus realized a handsome independence for himself and for his children.

THE BRIDAL SONG OF BIANCA SFORZA, 1494.

PEAL out! peal out! as well ye may,
Old Milan's steeples all:
The show is in the crowded way,
The feast is in the hall.
Haste! wreathe your doors with garlands round,
And throw your casements wide!
The noblest maid on Lombard ground
Ere noon must kneel a bride.

Come forth! come forth! ye burghers bold,
Lay by your pelfy gear,
Go, don your gowns and chains of gold,
And spread your festal cheer!

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Ye armourers, cease your clanking toil,
Throw plate and mail aside!
The fairest flower on Lombard soil
This noon must hail a bride.

Ring out! ring out, your trumpets high!
Fling, fling your banners wide!
Draw forth great Milan's chivalry,
And man your ranks of pride!
And beauty rare, and knighthood free,
In bridal pomp shall ride!
For Milan's heir this noon shall see
The mighty Kaiser's bride.

Rouse up, rouse up! ye gallants gay,
Rouse up, both prince and peer!
And prank ye for the tourney day,
And take the helm and spear!
And rein your steeds in stately guise
Within the lists to ride—
For Blanche of Milan gives the prize,
The Kaiser's princely bride.

THE WOMAN HATER.

No. II.

BY WARNER OLIPHANT.*

'Thou hast abused thy trust,
And she whose room unworthily thou fill'st
Is looking on thee from the home of saints
With meek reproachful eyes.'
THE FOUR GUARDIANS.

IT is a long time, my dear Cecil, since I put you in possession of the first part of these my confessions. For the delay, the painful nature of the subject, which repels rather than courts a renewed intimacy, will amply account. And the same reason may explain why I describe events in this paper which were not so closely personal to myself, in defiance of chronology and order. So the lesson be conveyed, it matters little from whose story it be drawn, or in what way related; so the drama have its moral, none need care whether I or another be the chief actor. To publish these records together, or in too close a succession, would be more likely to disgust or pain than to interest; you will not, therefore, wonder if the third section of them follows at as wide an interval as this second, though possibly it may not lag *quite* so far behind.

Let me merely state, that after the shocking events formerly related, my shaken health rendered travelling advisable, if not absolutely necessary; and that, concerning the time consumed in visiting other lands, though it too has its share of instructive materials for this series, I shall now be silent. On my return I found my views of life and its prizes far different from what had dazzled the lover of the faithless but unforgotten Aura. Ambitious then, I had now none whose praise might be the aim and object of my toil; riches without any to share them seemed quite unworthy of a struggle; my thoughts and habits of study did not now, as once, bend themselves strongly to one common goal, but gave symptoms, in restlessness and desultory exertion, of that literary epicurism which is the commonest state of intellectual degeneracy. Though I repined at this frustration of hopes I had once affectionately cherished, I was wholly unable to exercise that degree of watchfulness over myself which might have effected a cure; all sorts of studies claimed my attention, but satisfaction came with none. The polestar—poor Aura—was gone, and the compass-needle veered hither and thither, no longer knowing the north. Be sure that no seasoning of anger against her who had thus changed my nature and my life, mingles with the bitter draught of memory I am quaffing while I write. The gate of the tomb should bear a general pardon, signed by all the living, of the faults of those within its precincts; there is no quarrel between her and me. Not to succumb without an effort to the unmanly malady of listlessness, I imposed on myself the task of writing a small work, to which I need not more particularly allude, involving considerable application, and the necessity of taking the suffrages of numerous authorities: for the better execution of which, I collected my books, and retired to a village, or rather a small town, in a midland county, where salubrious air, noble scenery, and unbroken retirement, might all be secured.

Emberton-Grey wanted nothing that country towns generally possess, and had some advantages which few of the same class combine. These latter were, good society in the neighbouring country, yet a very limited circle of its own; an excellent situation, with wood and water, apart or wooingly combined, to salute the eye at every turn, yet no hateful complement of dusty-footed tourists or vagrant time-killers to disturb the retirement and repose which were its chief charm in my sight. The first day's glance made me willing to pitch my tent there for a time; the second day found me fixed there, and as studious as a monk. From daybreak till breakfast I read and wrote; afterwards I strolled down some quiet path near the little river,

* Continued from the No. for Nov., 1839. Erratum in the former paper—for *Pentegru* read *Penteyrn*, throughout.

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until weary; at midday I read and wrote again, and strolled again at evening. No doubt you, with your passion for politics, and love of bustle, will think my disposal of time very flat and uninviting; I was not myself in love with pursuits so tame, but I regarded them as *medicina mentis*, and took it, as I should any other unwelcome potion, with as little wincing as possible.

In my walks by the river I used frequently to meet a young man, generally, like myself, armed with a book, whose appearance made me long for his acquaintance. He was neither gay nor good-looking; but a dark, intellectual face, with eyes that seemed to realize the promise of his broad brow, served to pique one's curiosity, and excite an interest certainly not diminished by its being the only face that used to cross one's matutinal rambles. The drawback to his appearance was, that he looked what young ladies call woe-begone. His walk was slow, his face thin and sallow, and no alertness of motion of eye or head attested that he cared for the opening glories of a green spring. With characteristic hastiness, I came to the conclusion that a woman's frown was at the bottom of this disconsolate seeming; and, curious enough, I was right in my guess, though not a little wrong in my fancies of the bearings of the case, as indeed was he.

We soon grew friends, though we had not spoken; at length, by mutual consent, even this barrier was overleapt; we saluted as we met, and he called on me almost immediately after, introducing himself as Mr. Charles Crendon. On comparing notes, we found that both were Cambridge men, both had taken degrees there, and both were of St. John's. Here were topics enough in common, and farther conversation discovered still more. For mathematics he cared but little, as did I; the ardour of his studies was all directed to one author, Plato the divine—a taste somewhat unusual at Cambridge, but in which at an humble distance I participated. All his multifarious reading had been applied to the illustration of his favourite; he was none of your readers *qui multa hospitia habent, amicitias nullas*, but gloried in being a man of one book, a cultivator of one intellectual friendship.

'It is only by this constant study,' he remarked, when I commented on his enthusiasm, 'that we can really reap the fruits which an ancient writer has sown. To transcribe a few aphorisms, or jot down a few notes on the margin, will not much affect our tone of thinking; but daily study and reflection long continued gradually tinge the life and habits, until in the expression of our mind some strain of a higher mood, inspired by the spirit of our cherished author, yet not stolen from him, convinces us of our reward; though,' he added with a sigh, 'my own studies are often interrupted now.'

'It is undoubtedly the way to understand an author,' I said.

'The way to Plato's inner soul is a long one. I shall never reach the end, but there is satisfaction in taking even the first step. Seven lustres are to be devoted to his pages, so some tell us, before we can hope to understand him, aided by all advantages. I have barely given two to the labour.'

'Yet you seem full ten years my junior; there is a long future before you, from which you may hope everything. Possessing the main requirement, a love for your toil, there is nothing to prevent success as far as time is concerned.'

'I know not that,' he answered, with a shake of the head.

'You are an invalid, perhaps?' I asked.

'Not strictly. A severe affliction is wearing out my strength, but at present my ills are of the mind, not of the body. But I owe you many apologies for thus making you a party to complaints proverbially disagreeable to an uninterested hearer.'

'To change the subject then. I think you idolaters of

> 'That learned Grecian, who did so excel
> In knowledge passing sense, that he is named
> Of all the after-world, Divine,'

are among the blindest of earth's creatures. You shut your eyes so obstinately to every charge implying a fault in the great master, that calmer judges are deterred from bestowing the praise they think his due, because they are not suffered to blame.'

'Surely all Platonists are not such idolaters,' said Charles; 'I for one will cheerfully own that the son of Aristo is often illogical, often a trifler, (though that fault lies on his times, not him,) sometimes unjust, sometimes short-sighted, if every one will concede to me that for noble views in philosophy, for discernment of signs of change in the political atmosphere, though no bigger than a man's hand, for knowledge of character, and those lesser graces, a tongue of music, and a keen quiet wit, Plato is unsurpassed. Like our own Shakspeare, whichever of his good gifts you look at last, he seems to possess in greatest abundance. And what a dramatist! Show me a more natural scene in comedy, ancient or modern, I care not, than his *Banquet;* and then turn from it to that solemn picture of the philosopher, veiling his reverend head before the hurricane of a people's madness, which he cannot resist; or that less affecting, but still powerful sketch of philoso-

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phy, a dame of noble form and high lineage, compelled to listen to the suit, and submit to the embraces of some vile mannikin, clever enough perhaps in his own sphere, but despicable for his crazed ambition to win and wear this most noble mistress. Remember how he accounts for the depraved and tricksy systems taught in his time, as being the deformed offspring of this unnatural union. Is he not noble and true in all?'

'It has sometimes seemed to me that we lost an incomparable poet in gaining a mighty philosopher. Yet how strange,' proceeded I, 'that one whose works are almost poems, and who had studied closely, and critically, as has been conjectured from a hint in the "Banquet," the theory of poetry, should have indited one of the strongest and most earnest condemnations of the art on record.'

'You know the palliation we may find for him in the abused influence of poets when he wrote. But this charge, and that respecting his community of wives, must be treated in parallels. In the former, to get rid of a positive evil, he sacrificed an attainable good; in the latter, to attain a good, he overlooks a certain evil. You smile! perhaps you are thinking of his own poetical aspirations, and conjecturing that a drop of the acid of jealousy sharpened his pen in that matter of the poets.'

'You have conjectured aright the cause of my smiling,' I returned. 'But, waiving this, should we not use harsher terms in speaking of his hateful marriage scheme?'

'Yes; his view was unphilosophic in presuming that when the egotism of domestic affection was taken away, when it was expanded to embrace the mass of the state, it would still remain the same. But the answer is, did any Greek, looking on that monstrous excrescence of his country, its female population, devise a better remedy, or see the proper place women should hold? Few can boast, even now, of knowing the female heart truly; and how much less *then!*'

'You have touched,' I answered, 'the sore place of most political systems. We trust women with our happiness, place soul and body in their keeping; yet with what shameful and soul-withering neglect are their minds, which are to watch and comfort ours, educated! Just Heaven! that a man, proud, loving, and responsible for great gifts, should sleep himself to ruin in the arms of a being who has been taught to worship only one idol —her own reflection in the mirror; or, worse still, should shipwreck the best hopes of his life, because such a one will not smile on him.'

'Ay! but not for the sake of the worthless woman, now revealed, does the solitary man pine away; it is for what she once appeared, for the idea she planted in his mind at first, though perhaps the fault of overcharged colour was his own, he is content to waste life, and love no more. He forms a statue of his own fancy, and then sorrows like Pygmalion that it hath no life: this is the penalty strong natures must ever pay: they suffer by the intensity of their own creations.

'You speak, Crendon, as if your heart were the prompter,' I involuntarily said.

'It is, it is;' he murmured, rising and turning to the window to hide his face.

'My own can echo the thought,' I rejoined, seeing his emotion. 'Look at me, a grey-haired man, at five-and-thirty. Aura Marion, my beloved, that loved me not, for whom I could have toiled, struggled, or died—she is in the green ground, and I am growing old in thinking upon her image day by day.' It was the first time I had spoken of Aura, and I sobbed like an infant. The flood-gates of a ten-years' grief were opened, and to one almost a stranger.

'She is dead then?' said Charles, as we mutually shook hands. 'That is more dreadful. I thank God that Ellen is well and happy, though she has betrayed me to misery. One day,' he pursued, after a long and painful pause, 'you shall know my story. Yours I can almost guess. Come to me to-morrow, Oliphant—I cannot stay now.'

And Crendon, in whom I already recognized a friend, left me abruptly, to indulge his newer grief in solitude.

For brevity's sake you shall have Charles Crendon's history in my own words. He had travelled on the continent after leaving Cambridge, and had met at Manheim an English family, a Mr. Courbay, his wife, and two beautiful daughters, to whom he accidentally became known. With Ellen, the younger daughter, he formed more than a mere passing acquaintance, which induced him on his return to take up his residence in Emberton-Grey, the town where her family lived. When they returned to England, they found Crendon already a neighbour, and, to one at least of the family, an acceptable one. He won Ellen Courbay's love, after the manner of most men—that is, by presupposing her an angel, and acting and speaking accordingly; but his slender fortune, though amply sufficient for his bachelor wants, did not permit him to think of immediate marriage, and induced him to forego his distaste to the practice of any profession, so far as to turn his hopes to the study of the law. Mr. Courbay frankly accepted his suit, and applauded his intention; the docile and hopeful Ellen was willing to believe well of any project formed by her lover, and all seemed to smile on the

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happy Charles. Indeed, his family influence in some of the southern counties rendered it probable that the professional success of which his talents gave promise, would not be preceded by so long a period of briefless probation—that purgatory of the law that falls to the lot of many; so that there was every reason to hope that his love would be crowned by an early union. But at this critical time, just as Charles had concluded his arrangements with a special pleader, and was about to exchange his cottage for law-chambers, Mr. Courbay died suddenly. That mournful event, which on Ellen's account he lamented, he was destined to feel as keenly on his own. Mrs. Courbay and her daughters declined his visits. He wrote—the letter was returned. He again attempted to see them, and was stupified to find the whole family had gone, leaving their house and furniture to be immediately disposed of. Amazement mingled with his grief at this unlooked-for affliction; his sensitive and retiring pride, however, kept him from seeking the explanation he certainly had a right to demand; he neither followed the Courbays in their flight, nor wrote again; but all his habits and character conspired to increase the pangs of his hard trial. Until he had lost her, he had never fathomed the depth of his own love; and now, beyond a doubt, it was killing him. Never of a very strong constitution, an uncontrollable irritability of nerves was daily growing upon him, motion and bustle grew disagreeable, and unluckily they were the only things likely to effect a cure. Above all, he declined to leave Emberton-Grey, though confessing that every stock and stone about the place had some painful legend for his eyes.

'Did you never ascertain whether this devastation of your hopes was not caused by the mother?' said I, speaking, however, rather against my hopes. 'It is just possible that your Ellen, docile and compliant as you describe her, may have yielded to the imperious solicitings of her mother, at whatever expense to her own heart.'

'Mrs. Courbay is her stepmother—not her mother. I have thought often of that. But it were carrying even filial affection too far, to leave him whom she once professed to love, without one word of farewell.'

'Why, if a stepmother is in the case, she may have been prevented seeing or writing to you. Put no confidence in such an affinity. Go to them, demand an interview, arouse yourself to ask the question, "Was this shameful proceeding her own act?" and then ——'

'What then?' said Crendon, trying to smile.

'Give her scorn for scorn. Tell her you bless fortune and your stars that you have not thrown your happiness into her keeping, wish her all the joy a shallow heart and empty head can insure her, then turn on your heel, and see her no more.'

'We must not speak of her so hardly, Oliphant; nay, nor think thus until we know more. Some men would have pursued the fugitive, as you suggest. So would I, if I thought I could calmly meet her; but I will not go, to run the risk of increasing her triumph by the spectacle of my weakness. Pray speak of that no more. Did *you* act so with your first love?'

'Humph!' said I, 'I planned it so; but I confess the execution was weaker than the design. "Some natural tears I dropped, but wiped them soon." But peace to Aura's memory! Had she lived, her warm heart might, ere this, have peeped through the crust of vanity and neglected education, a blessing to all around her.'

Crendon clasped my hand. 'Your loss is greater than mine, yet you bear it better, my dear friend. They are at Cheltenham now, if I were brave yet humble enough to meet them.'

'Let not my advice urge you to such a step against your own feelings. That she is under the control of a stepmother, is a point gained, for the *mother* who could adopt this course, could hardly be blessed with an amiable daughter; *now* the daughter has yet to be proved.'

'Fortes creantur fortibus et bonis:
Est in juvencis, est in equis patrum
Virtus, nec imbellem feroces
Progenerant aquilam columbæ,'

quoted Crendon with a smile.

'May you find her all you can wish, my dear Charles!' I exclaimed; 'but you must own that remaining here is not likely to help the discovery.'

'Here I shall remain, nevertheless. They shall not witness the ruin they have caused,' returned he, dejectedly.

What my persuasions aimed at in vain, accident strangely effected. Charles was nephew to Sir Julius Crendon, a baronet of an old and well-endowed family, childless and infirm of health. There were two lives between Charles and the baronetcy—those of a brother of Sir Julius, and that brother's son, a fine lad of fifteen; and as there seemed little chance of his succeeding to the family honours, he never spoke of the possibility; nor perhaps would he, if his prospects had worn a much livelier front, as he neither esteemed money and title himself, nor wished to be courted by those who did. In proof of

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his carelessness to worldly things, I may mention that in our unreserved and confidential intercourse he never mentioned this circumstance until the following event compelled him.

One day he hurried into my room with an open letter, which he gave me hastily, and then threw himself prone on the sofa, sobbing convulsively. 'Read, read!' he uttered at intervals, and his farther attempts at explanation were fruitless. The letter was from a lawyer at Cheltenham, stating that Sir Julius Crendon had expired there of a broken constitution, and that intelligence had been received of the complete loss, with all hands, of a vessel in which the brother of Sir Julius, with his young son, was returning from Bombay to receive their kinsman's dying commands. The valuable document concluded by informing Charles of his being now one of the richest baronets in the kingdom, and added a warm felicitation on the change, with a hope that he would without loss of time repair to Cheltenham, as many arrangements must devolve on him which would require personal superintendence.

'I have not a relative now in the world,' he said. 'It is true I saw little of my uncles, and they never sought me: still it is awful to be left thus alone on earth! Alone! O Ellen, why is it thus?' And the unhappy young man clutched his hair, and buried his face in the sofa cushions. His grief was terrible, for it showed how utterly ill health had overthrown his self-control.

'My dear Crendon,' I returned, 'if you will accept my counsel, you will set off this very night for Cheltenham; the journey and subsequent excitement of business may arouse you from the dreadful state into which you are sinking, and nothing else can. Will you do so?'

'I cannot meet her under this new aspect of fortune. It has removed me farther than ever from her. It is impossible.'

'Miss Courbay will not refuse you her love merely because you meet her in grief —I see no new obstacle between you.' So said I; mentally. I added, 'If she be the woman her conduct threatens, she is not likely to frown on a young baronet with no incumbrances and a long rent-roll.'

'No, sir,' answered Charles sternly, and raising himself from the couch; 'but how shall I put her to the proof *now?* I read your thoughts. She would sell me the love she cannot give. It is an unworthy suspicion, and I do not harbour it; but if the truth were so, I would spurn her from my side, though we leant on the rails of the altar. Yet who shall resolve my doubts?'

'If you will promise to abide by my judgment, I engage to discover the truth for you. Ten minutes' conversation with Ellen will decide me, and in a week or two I shall be at leisure to follow you to Cheltenham, and make her acquaintance. Let this content you.'

'Warner Oliphant, you are indeed a friend. But you must see how unfit I am to undergo the trials and anxieties of such a neighbourhood as Ellen's: in pity go with me to-morrow, and I will thank you as long as I live.'

'Your proposal should be acceded to, were it ten times more difficult,' was my reply. 'And now you must contrive to get some repose.'

Poor Sir Charles had arranged matters for our journey with more promptness than I could have expected. A message sent by the Cheltenham night coach prepared our post horses until we reached Gloucester, and here we found that the lawyer had sent down the late baronet's carriage and horses to meet us. We left Gloucester a little before sunset, on one of the finest evenings I ever remember to have seen. Our equipage was a plain handsome barouche, drawn by a pair of compact, well-stepping iron-greys.

'They are new ones, Sir Charles,' said the coachman, touching his hat. 'They came out of Yorkshire last week for Sir Julius, but he did not live to drive them, poor gentleman!'

'Oliphant, you are fond of driving, will you take the reins?'

'Most willingly,' I answered.

'They are very nicely broken, sir,' said the coachman, moving to the near side of his box; 'only don't pull at their mouths, nor give 'em too much whipcord.'

The new greys fully verified their tutor's commendations, and we set out at a pace which promised to complete the distance between us and our goal far under the hour. Neither the cathedral of Gloucester, with its combination of styles, nor yet the pin-manufactory, both of which our host counselled us to see, cost us a thought of regret. We rode along the fine road at a cheerful pace: my spirits were exhilarated in despite of my companion, and even his began to share the infection, though in a less degree. He began to comment on the scenery as we passed along, which was a hopeful sign in one who had sat a whole day without a glance beyond the precincts of his carriage. All of a sudden he grew pale, and stood up to contemplate the movements of a party before us, who seemed to have great interest in his eyes. 'Oliphant,' he whispered, 'those are the Courbays.'

'Pshaw, man!' I returned; 'it is so dark that I can scarce see the colour of their horses; and do you pretend to recognize a lady in this light, by the back of her riding habit?'

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'I feel I am right,' he returned.

'Sit back, and put your cloak over your face; we are overtaking them.'

The persons in question were two ladies and a gentleman, all on horseback. A little behind was a chariot, evidently belonging to the party, as the gentleman once or twice rode back and spoke at the window. My friend's greys grew somewhat impatient of these evolutions, so I prepared to go past; but, just as I got abreast of the chariot, its horses, hearing our wheels at their side, from a snail's pace started forward in a furious gallop, setting at defiance a gallant effort made by the horseman to stop them. It was all I could do to keep the greys in hand. At last up went one side of the chariot on a bank, down went the other, and the whole machine was a mass of ruin.

'If the *injusta noverca* be inside,' thought I, 'I fear we have made an end of her.'

'It is they, said Crendon. 'I cannot alight—I am faint and sick—lend what help you can, Oliphant.'

We drew out of the prostrate vehicle its only inmate, who I concluded was Mrs. Courbay. Though quite insensible, it did not appear that she was much injured. There was a house not fifty yards off, and thither we bore her, followed by the two young ladies. Whilst they and the mistress of the house were applying restoratives, I carried Charles a glass of water as he sat in the carriage, partly because I thought he stood in need of it, and partly because I wished his consent to a plan of mine, which required that I should seem the owner of our equipage for a time.

On returning to the house, I found Mrs. Courbay so far recovered as to speak of proceeding homeward.

'Your carriage is so shattered, madam,' said I, 'that it is impossible it should go on; may I venture to hope that you will take a seat in mine, which was the unlucky cause of your accident? I have already proposed this to my fellow traveller, and he joins in my request.'

'I fear there is no choice, even if I were disposed to reject your courteous proffer, which I am not,' said Mrs. Courbay.

'May I ask whom we have to thank for this politeness, and the opportune assistance just rendered?' said the gentleman who accompanied them.

'I am Mr. Warner Oliphant, sir,' was the reply. It was my cue not to name my companion—with what hopes and results will be immediately seen. Whilst the preparations for departure were in progress, I flew back to Sir Charles.

'Now, my boy, can you sit still for half an hour, and listen while I talk to the stepmother?'

Charles nodded. 'I am quite prepared for the worst,' he said.

'Just put on these then,' and I handed him a pair of green reading glasses, which effectually concealed his eyes; an ugly travelling cap did the same for his expanded forehead, and the lower part of his face was hid by the collar of his Spanish cloak, Ellen herself could not have known him.

I handed Mrs. Courbay in, apologized for my 'friend, an invalid, about to seek health at Cheltenham,' not alighting, and we drove off.

'Your son rides well,' I remarked, with a glance at the cavalier.

'That is Captain St. Maur, not my son—though, to confess the truth, he will stand in that relation to me before many days,' returned Mrs. Courbay, with most unwelcome readiness.

'I presume, then,' said I hastily, 'he has the happiness to love the young lady next him, over whose saddle he is now bending?'

'You are right. She is my daughter Fanny,' said the lady.

Charles gave a sigh of relieved apprehension.

'Ellen is not fond of riding,' resumed our communicative fellow-traveller. 'Her health will not permit her, I fear, to use such violent exercise much longer. Cheltenham, that restores so many, seems to wither her.'

'She prefers some other residence, perhaps,' I remarked.

I believe the woman was captivated with my venerable appearance, for my hair was of a different date, by a score of years, from my baptismal register—I looked at least fifty-five;—so she proceeded,

'Probably you have divined the very cause of her weakness. Family circumstances—an unfortunate attachment, in short—compelled me to tear her away from her native place, and she has not been well since.'

In this manner beyond my hopes, did I gradually discover that Ellen had been mercilessly forced from her lover, whose footing in the family had only been maintained by Mr. Courbay against the influence of his wife—nay, that her own maid had been employed to frustrate all attempts to write. Mrs. Courbay added, that she thought she had now vanquished the attachment, which was a mere girlish fancy, and that, in fact, 'she believed the gentleman had all along been influenced by Ellen's pecuniary expectations, as her uncle in South America was expected to bequeathe her a large fortune.'

At this precious piece of impertinence, Sir Charles could not suppress a groan.

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'Your mention of the name of Crendon,' I remarked, 'reminds me of my errand to Cheltenham. I am to assist in some arrangements connected with the death of Sir Julius Crendon. Did you know him?'

'No, he had not been long a resident. We at first thought Mr. Charles Crendon might be of that family, but we hear that the baronet's only relatives were drowned in coming from India.

'You were misinformed, then, madam,' said I, weary of the scene. 'Permit me to present to you the present baronet, Sir Charles Crendon.'

'Who is flattered by your appreciation of his motives,' added the baronet, lowering his cloak. 'Woman, you have spoken very falsely, and for the way you have acted towards your unfortunate charge you will have your reward.'

'Merciful Heaven!' said the horror-stricken stepmother, 'how imprudently I have spoken!'

'For that, at least,' said I, 'we have to thank you. I ask your pardon for this little stratagem, which may yet be attended with happy results. Coachman, I walk up this rise.'

Overtaking the riding party, who had also slackened their pace, I begged for a moment's conversation with Miss Fanny Courbay. I apologized for my abruptness, and then obtained satisfactory answers from a pair of fine lips, in a sweet voice, to three or four questions respecting her sister's sentiments towards her old lover. She was sure that a renewal of intercourse with Charles Crendon was Ellen's sole chance of happiness.

'Then they had better meet now than risk a scene in the High Street,' I replied. 'Sir Charles Crendon is in that carriage.'

To omit the often-repeated and universally-understood details of a love-scene, our party changed now the order of its going, that the lovers might be together in the carriage, Sir Charles's coachman riding Ellen's horse, and I again driving. Mrs. Courbay spoke not a word; it was evident she was highly displeased at the turn affairs were taking. From what I knew of the woman then and after, I should say that, although not unwilling to have accepted the baronet for her stepdaughter under ordinary circumstances, she felt that the unguarded exposure of her tactics had made him contemn her for ever; so that, on Ellen's marriage, he would probably break off all intercourse between his wife and herself. As her husband's will had made her consent indispensable, and a loss of fortune the only alternative, she felt that it was in her power to make better terms; so she began her operations, shortly after our alighting at Cheltenham, by charging Ellen not to receive the visits of Sir Charles Crendon, any more than of Mr. Crendon. We experienced the fruits of this in our exclusion when we called the following day.

'The ladies are not at home,' was the answer to our inquiries.

'Did they leave no message?' said my companion.

'They did not, sir,' replied the lacquey, gradually diminishing the opening of the doorway.

We turned away.

'I lay any wager,' remarked I, 'that Mrs. Courbay is still playing the dragon; and if so, I warrant we outwit her. Come, Crendon, never look so miserable! Write to Ellen, man, this very hour, and hear the truth.'

He was saved this trouble by a dear little note from Ellen Courbay, to assure him of her unaltered feelings, and to explain how averse from their intercourse her mother still continued. It concluded by a firm avowal, that no such opposition, though strengthened by legal provisions, should alienate her affections from her beloved Charles. This document, after sundry extravagances, he showed to me. I read it, and gently laughed in my sleeve, as one always must at reading other people's love-letters. The ensuing incidents may be briefly stated. We determined on Gretna, established a communication with Ellen, and induced her to consent. I undertook the arrangements for getting away.

Mrs. Courbay's house stood, with three or four others, behind a clump of trees; the carriage-drive, common to them all, was closed at each end by an iron gate, which was locked every night, except when some festivity or other demanded an exception. None of the houses were accessible from the back, owing to the height of the walls, so that the projected elopement, if the parties outside were expected to lend aid, must take place from the side looking into the carriage-road. Sir Charles had little desire to participate in the active measures, though full of anxiety for their issue, and most eager to clasp his betrothed to his heart, and call her bride. It required some rhetoric to convince him that we were taking the only part left open to us by Mrs. Courbay's tyrannical behaviour. In fact, though Crendon was no coward, nay, full of generous bravery, still his sensitive disposition, and the nervous excitability developed by long mental depression, inspired him with a distrust for any exploit wearing an even slightly questionable hue. As for myself, I enjoyed the prospect of outwitting one for whom I felt so thorough a contempt

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as I did for the stepmother. On me, then, nothing loath, most of the onus of preparation fell; and many difficulties were thrown in my way before the following arrangements were completed. At three o'clock, on a Wednesday morning, we were to tap at a ground-floor window in Mrs. Courbay's house, as a signal that we were at hand, with everything necessary for flight, including a well-horsed carriage, and a newly-hired female attendant for Ellen. From this window (for the doors were locked and the keys removed) Ellen was to gain the arms of her lover, and they were to make the best of their way to Gretna. I provided two short ladders for surmounting the iron gate—we might have procured a key, but that step wore too much of a housebreaking air.

The best regulated plans may fail to guard every point. In this case, the irregularity of Mrs. Courbay's establishment led to the most disastrous consequences, and laid up a store of grief for me to the latest hour of my life. True to the appointed hour, Sir Charles tapped at the specified window, and waited anxiously for the responsive signal.

'Hist! Did you not hear voices in the room?' he said.

I listened, and fancied I heard voices, which, however, were quickly silenced, and we repeated our summons. This time the shutters were thrown open, and the room within, lighted up with a blazing fire, was revealed to our view. Two or three men were standing near, with looks of alarm on their countenances. At a glance I saw how matters stood. Mrs. Courbay's servants had taken advantage of the retirement of the family to enjoy a convivial meeting in her breakfast-room, during which we had surprised them.

'Charles, my boy,' I whispered, 'we must retreat immediately. If we are seen, we lose not only our present, but every future chance of success. Come, come.'

But Crendon seemed lost to everything but his disappointment—he did not move. With much alarm I now perceived that one of the servants carried pistols, with which, doubtless, he had provided himself after the first signal, and before opening the shutters.

'Who's there?' he cried, in a tone betwixt fear and drunkenness.

There was just time to clutch Crendon's arm before a flash, a report, and a groan from my friend, gave testimony of the menial's rashness. Charles sank back into my arms. Concealment was no longer to be desired—I bawled out,

'Scoundrels! you have shot Sir Charles Crendon. Run for help this instant. Fetch the nearest surgeon!'

With anxious alacrity my orders were obeyed. The unhappy young baronet was conveyed into the house, and deposited on a sofa. There was a long wound on the left side of his head, but, from its position I conjectured—what the surgeon, on his arrival, confirmed—that the ball, though it had stunned him, had not penetrated the skull. What added to the agony of the scene was, that Ellen, already dressed, and alarmed at the pistol-shot, had rushed down stairs, and, in a storm of grief, now knelt motionless on the floor, with her head buried in Crendon's bosom. It was a dreadful sight.

The surgeon, on inquiring the particulars, declared that my pulling Charles's arm had saved his life; told us that all depended on quietness and attention, and directed that the patient should not be moved from the house until his recovery should be effected. Mrs. Courbay, who was now present, promised that his comfort should be studied in every particular—she looked completely conscience-stricken.

'And, above all,' whispered the surgeon to me, 'remove that young lady. Her excited feelings may defeat all we can do.'

'Ellen, dearest!' said the stepmother, 'we must retire, and leave Sir Charles to the care of these gentlemen. Come, love, you must control yourself.'

'Madam,' said the unhappy young lady, raising her head, 'I obey you no longer. We have wounded my own Charles, perhaps murdered him. I shall not stir from his side, unless he bids me. Here is my place; it is useless to speak to me more!'

'But, my dear Miss Courbay,' said I, 'Sir Charles is not dead, and likely to do well, provided he be not disturbed. Would you throw away a chance of his recovery for the sake of indulging your too excited emotion?'

'O, pray let me remain and attend him! I will not betray any sign of what I feel—you shall not even see a tear. Good sir,' she added, turning to the medical man, 'say that I may stay with him. Nothing shall agitate or disturb him.'

At this moment the sufferer spoke. 'Ellen! where is Ellen?' he said, extending his hand feebly, which she clasped. 'Do not leave me, my own Ellen, and I shall be quite happy.' She kissed his hand, and none of us interfered further. Her behaviour was regulated with an anxious care that raised her high in every one's estimation. Symptoms of fever became manifest almost immediately, and with unremitting assiduity she administered medicines, bathed the patient's burning head with cooling lotions, and moistened his parched lips with fruits, or refresh-

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ing draughts prepared by her own hands, until the surgeon confessed that a better nurse could not have been procured. But all her care, and that of others, was unavailing; the wound, not serious in itself, became so from the excited temperament of the patient, and in a short time Crendon became delirious, in which state he continued, growing gradually worse, and at length his life was despaired of. Ellen received the shocking tidings with no frantic outburst of grief; but it was plain the arrow sank deep into her heart. She persisted in retaining her place at the sick man's bedside, and in a few hours more the young, high-souled man—the sound scholar, the amiable friend, the true lover—expired in Ellen's arms, in a state of utter unconsciousness.

At Mrs. Courbay's frantic entreaty, I went to remove Ellen from the chamber of death, where she sat in a state of stupor. At first my efforts to arouse her attention were fruitless—I took her hand.

'Why seek you consolation from the dead, Ellen? He is not lost, but gone before to a brighter home. Dear friend, I too have known your grief, and know its cure. Let us retire and pray.'

A gentle pressure of her cold hand rewarded me for the effort of self-control; she submitted to be led away, and, after further attempts to assuage her sorrow, I entrusted her to the kind attentions of her sister Fanny.

The description of poignant grief has somewhat of desecration in it, and I cannot proceed. On examining Crendon's papers, his lawyer found a will, dated the very day on which he was wounded, devising all his large property, landed and funded, to Ellen, and bequeathing to me his valuable library, together with all his papers. To examine the latter was a melancholy pleasure, and one on which I bestowed many an hour. Among them was an elaborate edition, prepared by my friend, of the Banquet of Plato, displaying an immense fund of learning and taste, and full of apt illustrations from the gardens of ancient and modern poetry. The perusal of it gave me such delight that I published it anonymously, as my friend had intended, and had the gratification to find my own judgment confirmed by the testimony of some of the most eminent foreign scholars, to whom I confided the editor's name. Other papers there were, plainly not intended for the public gaze, and many of them related to his love for Ellen; love had made him, as it has many others, cultivate poetry, and his productions, viewed as early attempts, had great merit. All convinced me that one capable of achieving a great reputation had died and made no sign; and this brief record is perhaps the sole memorial of his life.

Ellen survived his loss, but she refused any longer to live with her stepmother. She spends her life in retirement at Emberton-Grey, disbursing her ample fortune in benevolent works, and in acts of kindness to the family of her sister Fanny, now Mrs. St. Maur. Mrs. Courbay applied to me to endeavour to appease Ellen, and effect a reconciliation.

'I may take it upon me to say, that Ellen cherishes no angry feeling towards Mrs. Courbay,' was my answer. 'She wholly disapproves the line of conduct pursued towards her, and, looking to its fatal consequences, is naturally averse from an intercourse fraught with painful associations. For my own part, I beg to decline all interference.'

'I am to understand then,' said the lady, 'that you attribute the late melancholy events to my conduct with regard to my daughter?'

'Unfortunately for my own peace, madam, I attribute them in great measure to myself. You ran the risk of breaking your daughter's heart because her lover was poor, and again, because he discovered your motives and despised them. I think therefore that you may reasonably expect some blame.'

'At all events, Mr. Oliphant, I could not foresee consequences; you can but charge me with ignorance.'

'Madam,' I answered, 'I have seen a good deal of woman's mind in my life, and I do not think it prone to self-accusation. Your plea amounts to this. You made your child pass through the fire to Moloch, because you thought Moloch was a god. There are many cases in which ignorance is sin.'

'Gracious heaven! sir,' replied Mrs. Courbay, 'I have but acted as any other mother might have done.'

'I know that it is the accursed creed of the marrying world that happiness, like a lord mayor of London, requires a coach to ride in. You prostrate yourselves before the wheels of Juggernaut, because the idol comes in a cariage; if he came on foot, you would not so much as bow to him. You find consolation in the prevalence of such base notions; far be it from me, madam, to rob you of it. Good morning.'

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THE STOLEN KISS.

BY MILES MALLORY.

WILL you for ever be severe,
And frown upon my bliss
Because I press'd your balmy lips,
And softly stole a kiss.

The judge, less cruel far than you,
A milder sentence gives,
In pity spares the guilty thief,
Who only steals to live!

Nor yet, dear maid, should you forgive,
Shall I unpunish'd go;
For when I kiss'd your roseate lips,
It but increased my woe.

THE YOUNG MEMBER'S WIFE.

A TALE OF THE DAY.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

'Mutual affection requires to be preserved by mutual endeavours to amuse and to meet the wishes of each other; but where there is a total neglect and indifference either to amuse or oblige, can it be wondered if affection, following the tendency of its nature, becomes indifferent, and sinks into mere civility?' ANONYMOUS.

PERHAPS there is no country in Europe where the young and beautiful wives of the aristocracy receive so little personal protection from their husbands as in England. This assertion, at the first moment, may appear extravagant and unfounded; but those who have had the opportunity of observing more narrowly than the mere superficies affords, the manners and habits of persons in fashionable life, and the various causes in it of domestic alienation, will be compelled to agree with me that it is, lamentably, only too true.

For instance—clubs, the turf, shooting, hunting, and the senate, furnish incessant, and, in the opinion of most men, imperative and legitimate reasons for abandoning their wives to their own resources, and to the guardianship of their own honour; and highly indeed does it redound to the credit of my fair and fascinating countrywomen, that so few, so very few comparatively, fall a sacrifice to the stupendous security thus inconsiderately, if not cruelly, placed in them—there never having been yet a young female so isolated, with even only moderate pretensions to beauty, who did not find herself the object of the vicious designs of the libertine, and who, although she escaped pure and unsullied from his insidious snares, still painfully felt the consciousness of her own weakness, and the want of a husband's protection in the hour of danger and temptation. For, even to the most virtuous, flattery is a temptation to a certain extent, few female hearts being totally insensible to the witchery of long-continued and respectful assiduity, however surrounded by the bulwarks of chastity and decorum.

But that they do often escape such perils, and triumphantly too, solely and entirely by their own powers of resistance and innate high principle, will be demonstrated in the following simple and true story.

I shall not enter into a minute and uninteresting detail respecting the earlier years of my heroine, which would prove tedious to my readers, she having passed them precisely like every other happy girl, cradled in the lap of luxury, with health, beauty, talents, unbounded spirits, and blindly indulgent parents, but introduce her briefly to them, at the age of eighteen, and just four months after her union with the object of her first artless affection, a rich, handsome, and adoring young man of twenty-two.

When Agnes Bouverie, after a short and uninterruptedly happy courtship, accompanied Horace Wilmer to the altar, to plight her heart's vows of eternal love and fidelity to him, she was perfectly delirious with delight at the prospect of felicity thus suddenly presented to her view.

Without an atom of experience on either side, full of the wild exuberance and gorgeous anticipations of youth, in the flush of hope and prosperity, with joy and laughter swelling the sails, the young couple were launched on the ocean of pleasure and dissipation, to steer their course through its dangerous shoals and quicksands as it might please chance, or rather Providence, to direct their frail bark—for there ever is a watchful One hovering over the young and inexperienced, so long as the errors they commit proceed from thoughtlessness alone, and not crime.

Agnes had, besides, the strongest guarantee a woman can possess against the seductions of flattery and the insinuations of art, in the boundless affection and admiration she felt for her husband. She wanted no more knowledge of the world, no deeper astuteness, to be proudly conscious of his vast superiority over the whole crowd of adulators who worshipped at the shrine of her superlative and unrivalled beauty. Love instructed her to compare him with others, and invariably to make the comparison in his favour.

'Man's love is of man's life a thing apart,
'Tis woman's whole existence.'

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Not that this opinion of the caustic but elegant Byron could apply to Horace in the remotest degree; for if Agnes made her affection for him the sole cause of delight to her existence, he, in return, appeared to live only for her. Hourly, indeed, did he feel his adoration increase for the devoted trustfulness, the sweet child-like dependency, of his young and lovely wife. At first, he did not deny, even to himself, that it was her mere personal attractions that awakened the passion which induced him to make her his; but the amiability of her disposition, the rare qualities of heart he discovered in her, the reliance she placed in him, the confidence she inspired that it was in his power alone to render her really happy, rivetted the chains of affection round his heart—chains, he felt, would and must last for ever, for they were forged by beauty, and linked by virtue. As day after day thus glided past in the serenity of mutual endearment, without a cloud to dim love's iris, or cast a chill over the sunshine of ardent and youthful feeling, Agnes could not but become sceptical as to the truth of the numerous cautions she was constantly receiving from her considerate but less happy female friends—not to calculate too much on her present felicity—that she must not expect Horace always to be the same—that it was inherent in man's nature to seek for change—that inconstancy, alas! was the grand exception to perfection in his sex—and that she had no right, beautiful and affectionate as she was, to expect a miracle to be wrought in her favour, to destroy a truth established almost since the creation. A constant husband!—the idea was truly preposterous, and the sooner she banished it from her bosom, the better for her peace of mind, there being none such.

'I do not expect a miracle to be wrought in my favour,' she would mentally exclaim, after meditating profoundly on the subject ever present to her imagination, and to which these remarks of her more experienced friends added a painful and lively interest, the continuance of her husband's affection, 'but I cannot perceive a shadow of change in him. Does not his eye follow my every movement with the same glance of fond approval? is not his smile of greeting as sincere, and his parting kiss as ardent, as they were at the first hour of our union? and when did his voice possess a deeper, a dearer emphasis of tenderness than now? when did his "my own love," as he has always called me since that happy union, thrill my soul with greater bliss than the last time he uttered it? Men might be changeable naturally, no doubt; but my Horace will and must ever be the same. Yes, yes, I am sure he must. Then why torment myself with groundless fears, and unfounded anticipations of evil?'

Poor Agnes! She was just at that self-deluding age when the chrysalis, engendered in the heart from her very being, bursts its transparent envelope, and the imprisoned butterfly Hope expands its broad beautiful wings over it, to the exclusion of all the more terrible and chilling realities of life. Then it is that the eye is radiant with soul-born brilliancy, the cheek warm with the deepest blush of vitality, the step bounding and elastic, and woman appears the bright animated personification of glad, joyous, trustful expectation—only, alas! to be crushed, to be bowed, to be annihilated, by the ponderous arm of disappointment, that awful machine, that pulverizes as it were to dust every sanguine anticipation of youth, to be scattered abroad by the tempestuous blasts of experience.

About this time, a vacancy occurred in the representation of his native town, the liberal member having died of a sudden attack of apoplexy, from over-exerting himself at a public meeting respecting the repeal of the corn laws, the subject of all his political labours and desires, and for the obtaining of which he really did consider life a cheap sacrifice; and as Horace's political opinions were precisely the same on that head, his friends urged him to offer himself as a candidate for it. Young, rich, elegant, and highly popular as he was, how could he do better? they observed. How, indeed! particularly as he was literally without a pursuit, and began to feel the want of some active and absorbing occupation. He therefore stood, and had the gratification of being returned by a most triumphant majority, always a proud era in a man's life.

At first Agnes was charmed with his success, and warm and heartfelt were her congratulations on the occasion. Horace being in parliament, she thought, would oblige them necessarily to reside more in London too—her darling London, with its opera, its theatres, its '*matinées musicales*,' its evening concerts, and its Almack's—in fact, with its thousand delightful sources of amusement and pleasure, with which the lovely daughters of fashion are never satisfied, but still feel an unappeasable craving after them, even when the day of enjoyment seems to have flown for ever—

'As if increase of appetite grew with what it fed on.'

There was so much actual business, however, to be transacted after his return, that the first month of their being in town passed away without affording Agnes an opportunity of

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visiting one of the above-mentioned places, accompanied by her husband; and, insatiable as she was in the pursuit of pleasure, her fond philosophy taught her that it would defeat its own object to seek it without him; so that, in fact, she lived, and in the very height of the season too, even more retired than when in the country, being there continually surrounded by a circle of attached friends and relatives, all studious to promote her happiness.

Then, unless she could contrive to dine when every other fashionable woman was sipping her chocolate, there was not the slightest chance of her partaking of that hitherto prolonged meal with her beloved Horace; for, 'attend the House he must;—there were such important measures just now in agitation, so much at stake, that a man who really wished the good of his country must consent to waive all minor considerations of personal comfort and convenience to be at his post, the least display of apathy or supineness being taken immediate advantage of by the opposition party, who were only too much on the alert already.' Agnes, therefore, submitted unmurmuringly to this innovation of domestic comfort for the sake of *patriotism*, making her moderate dinner at any hour, however primitively early, that suited his arrangements, for the feast of Apicius would not have afforded a banquet to her unshared by her husband. Indeed, such was the lively and anxious interest she took in all that concerned him, that for several weeks she sat up until his return, let the debate have been ever so protracted, to participate in his success, or to soothe the irritability and chagrin of his disappointment.

But such long and solitary vigils began to undermine her constitution and prey upon her spirits, particularly when, with the tact of a sensitive, delicate-minded woman, she discovered that the sacrifice was not duly appreciated by the idolized being for whom it was alone made—then, indeed,

'A change came o'er the spirit of her dream.'

Horace was altered! He had become cold, indifferent, and petulant—fatigued, harassed, and frequently smarting under the infliction of mortified vanity, occasioned by the bitter sarcasms of his talented opponents, when he returned to her, after hours of patient watchings, no smile of gratitude repaid the welcome almost wept upon his bosom, no kind word of encouragement cheered her on in her self-imposed task of love and duty, but perhaps a chilling reproof, for being so *tiresome* as to wait up for him, was all the return she received for her unbounded and anxious tenderness. Ah! it requires much severe and bitter schooling to convince the fond loving heart of woman that anything it has done for the object of its dearest affections is a sacrifice; but when once it is taught the fearful lesson, it retains it with a tenacity fatal to every hour of its after happiness. Then does every act of self-abnegation, every act of humiliation, every act of privation, so willingly, so unconsciously endured, rise up reproachfully to upbraid it with the blindness of its partiality—for there is nothing so proudly just to itself as neglected affection; and this Agnes felt in its fullest force, when, even in the morning, Horace could not find time to inquire into the causes of her declining health or dejected spirits, every moment being eagerly devoted to the examining how the newspapers reported his speeches, to writing to his constituents, to reading petitions, to replying to solicitations of patronage, (and, of course, promising it,)—for where is the dashing cornet who has not been assured that his dream of 'a company' is about to prove no fiction?—the daring midshipman, whose shoulder had not ached, or rather throbbed, with pride, under the weight of the glittering epaulette?—or the starving author who, while he drew out his last solitary shilling for that loaf of bread which was to prolong yet a little space the existence of creatures entwined around his very soul, has not felt his purse heavy with the gold promised for his next work by the new and popular M. P.? In fact, business multiplied so upon his hands, that he found it utterly impossible to attend to the less important wishes and pleasures of his wife. 'If you are so dull at home, my love,' he would frequently observe, in reply to her tender remonstrances, 'you really must try and find amusement for yourself by visiting more generally. You have plenty of friends who will be delighted to show you every attention, and it is not to be expected that, now I am in parliament, I can find time to dangle about to all the balls and routs you may desire to go to, Agnes. Look at other men's wives! How do they act? Why, reasonably, to be sure, by going where they like without their husbands, and enjoying themselves too.'

But it was in vain that Horace Wilmer adopted this worldly-minded line of argument—the gentle, the susceptible Agnes could not become a convert to it. She could derive no consolation from the certainty that other women were able to endure the anguish and humiliation of being despised and neglected by those who had sworn before God to love and cherish them; she only wondered that their hearts did not break, as she felt hers

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assuredly must, at this dreadful blow to all its dearest hopes.

'Alas! the love of woman! it is known
To be a lovely and a fearful thing;
For all of theirs upon that die is thrown,
And if 'tis lost, life has no more to bring
To them but mockeries of the past alone.'

It was with Horace as with most other young men of desultory habits and unstable principles, that the last novelty becomes the favourite hobby, to the partial, if not total, exclusion of the preceding idol erected by fondness or whim in the bosom. Thus Agnes was forced to yield sovereignty to ambition, and love be deposed in favour of patriotism. But if any one had hinted to him that his oratorical vanity and pride of place were breaking his wife's heart, by monopolizing all his thoughts, or exposing her to the insidious arts of those noxious reptiles (the *blasé* libertines) ever found crawling in the wake of beauty and innocence, intent to aggravate the gangrene of blighted affections, and to reap the fruits of the mortified and revengeful feelings they know so well how to awaken in the breast of a slighted woman, he would have lifted up his hands with unaffected astonishment, marvelling how so dangerous and mischievous a lunatic could be suffered to go at large—so blind are the generality of men to the most palpable facts, when the mind is preoccupied by any darling passion!

One of those dazzling fire-flies of seduction was for ever emitting its meteoric brilliancy in the darkened path of the neglected and sorrowing Agnes, marking with the most intense and jealous anxiety every change that occurred in her domestic happiness, penetrating her every thought, and reading the pain and anguish of her lacerated heart; and this was the Honourable Ernest Caversham, the favourite school companion of Horace, his inseparable manhood friend!

'A friend:
Treason is there in its most horrid shape,
Where trust is greatest!'

Handsome, accomplished, and unprincipled, he only employed the gifts so lavishly bestowed by nature on him to entrap the artless and unsuspecting, and never, never had the numerous victims of his perfidy awakened one pang of remorse, one compunctious feeling, in his indurate and callous bosom, for all the ruin and misery entailed on them.

Instantly enamoured of the extreme beauty and simplicity of Agnes, he determined to use every effort to supplant the idolized Horace in her affections. His long experience and deep study of the female character taught him that to succeed in such an object would be a tedious work of time; but, alas! his fatal success in too many similar cases forbade him to despair in this instance.

'They are wonderfully attached to each other, certainly,' he would exclaim mentally, after musing on the display of reciprocal tenderness they neither of them considered it necessary to restrain before so intimate and *sincere* a friend, 'but it cannot last for ever; lovely as she is, time must produce satiety, that curse of married life, or the dormant seeds of ambition will quicken into being, to rouse her husband from his entrancement, and then, Ernest, she is yours!'

Too truly did the first part of his accursed prediction come to pass in the estrangement of Horace—for the rest, *nous verrons.*

Being a friend her husband so highly esteemed, and being also perfectly unconscious of the impression she had made on him, and the secret views he entertained respecting her, Agnes treated Ernest with the most unreserved familiarity, receiving him kindly whenever he called, and found a relief, when at last thrown so much upon herself, in his lively and amusing conversation, from the lassitude and *ennui* of her own sadder thoughts.

This he soon discovered, and on this he regulated his future conduct. Her love for her husband was yet too ardent and acute for him to dare to hazard a word of sympathy, or even, indeed, allow her to perceive that he was aware of the cause of her extreme dejection. No, no; he knew that, like a timid bird, she would take instant alarm at it, and escape ere she was properly entangled in the snare. She was not to be lightly won over from affection, duty, virtue, and religion, but must be led on imperceptibly step by step, like the feeble infant, who gradually loses the fear of danger from the tender encouragements of its nurse, and boldly at last takes the road to freedom and liberty pointed out to it.

Thus, by degrees, he led her to place unlimited confidence in him—to tell her troubles—to weep over her disappointments—to complain of the coldness and indifference of her husband (the first sure mark of triumph to the practised seducer,) to consider him, in fact, in the relationship of a brother, (a name he was for ever bestowing upon himself,) and what brother so fond, so tender, so respectful, so full of delicate attentions, as Ernest Caversham? O what a consolation he was to her in her anguish and despair! The time was now no longer irksome; she scarcely felt the want of Horace's society; as she had not the opportunity of talking to him, she could freely indulge in the next dearest to her heart, talking of him. And to what a listener!

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how patient, how sympathizing! how intuitively did he enter into her every feeling of wretchedness! how did the tear of compassion swell into his fine dark eye—how did his lofty intellectual forehead contract with pain and anger—how did his deep sonorous voice become tremulous with emotion, as he tenderly yet warily endeavoured to convince her that she was the most beautiful, the most neglected, and the most wronged of women, and that his heart bled for her! and how, too, did his hand tremble, when in the excess of his commiseration he suddenly seized hers, and pressed it to his heart with a warmth of friendship that spoke his disinterested sincerity!

Then, again, how severely did he reprove himself for his indiscreet zeal, when he perceived that his covert insinuation of her husband's unworthiness to possess such a treasure, and that if he had been so blessed as to have called her his—

> 'If Heaven had made him such another world,
> Of one entire and perfect chrysolite,
> He'd not have sold it for her,'

brought the vivid blush of indignation to her cheek, and the eloquent vindication of her lip for her still-adored Horace—how did he implore her pardon and forgiveness for his rashness, and how boundless his almost schoolboy transport when he obtained them! Nothing, indeed, could exceed the self congratulation of Agnes, in thus so providentially having found such a friend, adviser, and consoler in her affliction, and how much she thought had Ernest Caversham been misrepresented by those who described him to her as a heartless profligate, and licentious; he, who was the invariable advocate of virtue—he, who protested that he entertained the most utter detestation and abhorrence for the man who would basely take advantage of a woman's sorrows to betray her to crime, ruin, and remorse; such were the godlike sentiments his lips breathed, such were the godlike sentiments her heart fervently and sincerely responded to!

Agnes could not, however, help being struck sometimes, with all her inexperience, at the constancy of his devotion to her. Had he no other friends who had a claim upon his time? no other pursuits or interests to attend to? How could one so courted and admired (for, notwithstanding his notorious libertinism, his rank was a passport even into the most decorous of fashionable society,) be content to sacrifice days, weeks, and months, to soothe the pains, the ennuis of a miserable married woman? Often, when she charged him of neglecting others for her sake, he would assure her that there was none in whom he took such an interest—none who could afford him half the pleasure he derived from her confidence, and being permitted to atone by friendship for the injuries she sustained from love.

This close and unreserved intercourse insensibly endeared Ernest to the heart of Agnes, and rendered him essential to her happiness (for woman's love is, after all, only the deepest sense of gratitude, at discovering that she is the object of undivided regard and affection in the bosom of another). His sympathy, his adulation, his dangerous, gentle, and undeviating solicitude in her welfare, were the subject of her meditations by day, and her dreams by night, and forced many an unpleasing comparison on her mind, when contrasted with Horace's still continued indifference and inattention.

Ernest knew his triumph. He knew that his witcheries had wrought the enchantment he intended—he knew that his lovely unsuspecting victim was actually within the magic circle of the sorcerer, spell-bound and incapable of resistance; but he did not wish to precipitate his enjoyment—he was resolved to luxuriate over the banquet in imagination, like a true epicurean, aware that the sweetest flavour of the most luscious fruit is destroyed when once tasted.

As the recess approached, however, he reflected that Horace would be less preoccupied, and consequently have more leisure to devote to his wife, and, perhaps, regain that affection she was still totally unconscious was lost to him, imputing all she felt for Ernest to friendship alone.

Now, then, was the moment to strike the decisive blow—now was the time to reap the rich harvest of his long-practised hypocrisy and deceit, and Ernest did not lose the opportunity. Dressing his face in unwonted sadness, he called upon Agnes earlier than even his accustomed early hour. She was instantly struck with his visible dejection; of course to question him on its cause, to offer sympathy, to resent the mystery in which he concealed his griefs from her, was natural—was what he expected—was what he desired—was what he hoped for. After listening to her reproaches for his unkind and cruelly prolonged silence—after being taxed with ingratitude—after hearing her declare, with tears in her eyes, that she was confident he had no sincere regard for her, and that her friendship, like her love, was flung back on her own sorrowing heart, to wither there too, with all the other flowers, fostered into bloom by a false and flattering hope;—as if suddenly struck with dismay at this last accusation—as if eager to vindicate himself from it at any sacrifice, he, with an apparently violent effort to master his own feelings, and to spare hers as much as possi-

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ble, assured her, with a passionate flood of tears, 'that nothing but her reproaches should have wrung his secret from him, that he would for ever have imposed silence on his regrets, and that she should never have known that it was the loss of that very friendship she accused him of not feeling, that was for ever indelibly impressed upon his heart, to form alike the charm and torture of every hour of his future blighted existence — that, in fact, the idea of parting with her for ever, had alone betrayed him into that display of extreme anguish, of which he had unintentionally made her a witness. 'I thought,' he exclaimed, with increasing vehemence, 'that I had schooled my heart to forbearance, to fortitude, to patience—but your tears—your pity — your fatal misconception of my silence, have quite unmanned me. I blush for my weakness! can you forgive it?' Here he threw himself in a paroxysm of despair into an armchair, burying his face in his hands, through the fingers of which Agnes beheld the tears of anguish fast oozing.

'But why need we part, Ernest?' exclaimed Agnes in a voice of the tenderest commiseration. 'Do you suppose I should not feel the loss of your society as much as you would mine? O more, infinitely more; for if you forsake me, who will then pity, console, or befriend the miserable and forlorn Agnes? We must not part, we must not indeed; I could never survive the separation from you!'

'My own sweet adored Agnes, my only friend, my sole consolation in this world, I take the Almighty to witness how foreign all idea of separation was to me. But it must be so for your own peace of mind, for your respectability, for your reputation; the world insists on it, and the world *must* be obeyed. Yes, dear, dear idolized Mrs. Wilmer, we must part now, and for ever. Some busy demon, envious of our happiness, has misconstrued our innocent friendship into love, branding me as a seducer to your husband, and oh! horror, horror, horror! you, Agnes, you, as a willing participator in my crime; and he is frantic at his supposed dishonour! but read, read, and judge for yourself,' he continued, forcing a letter into her almost paralysed hands, the first line of which convinced her that it was indeed written by Horace. It was as follows:

'What name does that man deserve, who under the specious semblance of friendship, steals into the unguarded bosom of an unsuspecting woman, to rob it of its dearest possession, chastity? Why, villain, infamous, deceitful villain — and such is the one which I now bestow on Ernest Caversham! As for the misguided and unfortunate victim of your guilty and evanescent passion, I leave her to the bitterness of that remorse, which will infallibly rear its serpent-crested head in her heart, to sting it to despair for the wrong she has inflicted on mine. Tell her that no protestations of innocence will convince me — that no tears will melt me — that no repentance will influence me. I have lost all confidence in her; it is for ever stifled in my bosom; and that even in the grave I shall retain a consciousness of her atrocity. All I ask of you is to remove her, and every relic of her, from the abode she has so polluted, that her remembrance may never more meet the eye, nor her name the ear, of the miserable outraged Horace.'

'Oh! was there ever sorrow like unto my sorrow?' exclaimed the agonized girl, clasping her hands and shedding a torrent of tears. 'To be thought guilty by my husband — to be thought an adultress by the world — dreadful, most dreadful! Would that I could die this moment! I must, I will write to him. I can with a word convince him of my innocence. He will believe me — he will forgive me—he must love me again. My own Horace cannot credit such gross criminality in his Agnes!'

Ernest waited patiently until the first ebullition of grief had exhausted itself; then taking her passive hand, he said in a tone of such abject resignation as thrilled to her inmost soul, 'Do, dear Agnes, do write to your husband instantly; let me be the sacrifice; I can but die—too, too happy if by so doing I can restore you to felicity again. But do not flatter yourself with such a delusion; the seeds of jealousy, once sown in such a heart as his, are never, never eradicated—you must therefore prepare yourself for his hourly upbraidings—his distrust—his indifference—his *hatred*; can you submit only to be an object of the coldest pity and toleration, in that heart where you were lately worshipped, idolized, and even venerated, Agnes? No, no, no, you cannot! you would expire with anguish!'

'O what is to be done? where can I fly from such a fate? O, mercy, mercy, the thought almost destroys me!'

'Where can you fly?' exclaimed Ernest, catching her in his arms, and straining her to his heart with a suffocating violence. 'Where, but with your slave—the man who has long made you the only idol of his soul! O Agnes! I thought it merely friendship, but it is love—boundless, ecstatic, intoxicating love I feel for you, beautiful, angelic, adored woman. You must, you shall be mine—happy, happy Ernest!'

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'Yours,' she absolutely screamed, disengaging herself from his encircling arms, 'you do love me, then? You are the villain Horace takes you to be? you are the serpent that is to sting me with remorse?' then flinging herself wildly on her knees, she exclaimed frantically, 'O God, pardon me for trusting that man! Go, go!' she continued, seeing him still hesitate to leave her, 'Go! your very presence fills me with shame and horror—shame at my own credulity, and horror that there is such a monster on the earth. O how I thank thee, heaven, for this escape! Go, go, wretch that you are, or my menials shall force you to obedience. I will remain here till Horace returns—I will fling myself at his feet—I will force him to believe my innocence, or die at them, blessing him still with my latest breath.'

'O it is no use preparing for a scene,' he observed, smiling sarcastically, 'you need not hope to establish your innocence by vilifying me—your husband will not credit your assertions; he places too much reliance in *my* honour for you to succeed with him there, madam.'

'Reliance in *your* honour,' she exclaimed, with the bitterest contempt; 'no, he placed reliance in *my* honour; he entrusted his own to the custody of his wife, and he shall not be deceived in his confidence. Do not imagine,' she continued, with an imposing dignity of tone and manner, 'that I am going to injure his feelings, or my own reputation, by giving greater publicity to your audacity. No, I have too sincere a regard even for his pride, and hold you in too sovereign detestation, to allow even a word of this scene to transpire. Besides, the woman who cannot protect herself against the designs of insidious villany, would infallibly fall into the snare, if surrounded by the bulwark of the united universe. She must defend herself from them, and can, if she really possesses any genuine principles of virtue. If I cannot convince him of the utter falsehood of that letter—if he is still resolved to banish me from his home and heart—'

'O, as for that letter,' interrupted Ernest, 'your husband knows nothing about it, nor is he jealous of our intimacy. If the truth must be told, I wrote it myself. The confession is humiliating, I grant; but you have misled me, Agnes, cruelly misled me. I thought you loved me, and it was to overcome any latent scruples of virtue you might have, that I practised what I considered in love only "a pious fraud."'

'You wrote that letter—you thought I loved you!' cried the delighted girl, almost extending her arms to him, 'O, if ever I felt inclined to do so, it is at this moment—it is now, in hearing you pronounce the blessed words, that my husband does not, never did suspect my innocence. Go! I pardon and forgive you for the torture you have inflicted on me. I owe you much for the lesson you have taught me. You are my first and last male confidant, rest assured, and but for your precipitate villany, I might have fallen a victim to the imprudence of making such a one. It will be a warning to me for ever; may it have a salutary effect on your own callous and reprobate heart, Mr. Caversham.'

Thus she parted for ever with her unique friend—her paragon of perfection—the man she fancied necessary to her happiness: how did she shudder at her escape, when she discovered that he was not in the remotest degree essential to it—that he had seduced her imagination at the expense of her judgment, and that her heart was quite untouched!

The recess brought Horace—his time, and his affections, back to her, in all the freshness of his early love, and he was both surprised and delighted to find that his beloved Agnes was more devoted than ever—more anticipatory of his wishes, more thoughtful for his happiness; and all with that subdued tenderness of manner, which rendered her even more beautiful and interesting—woman never appearing so truly irresistible as when under the government of a shrinking and bashful timidity. Horace imagined it was owing to time and experience having matured her judgment and chastened her heart, but it arose from a holy gratitude to the Almighty, for having extended a helping hand to rescue her from the fascinations of vice.

The fashionable journals shortly announced the departure of the Honourable Ernest Caversham for the continent. Horace imputed it solely to his being involved, and was hurt and offended that he had not sought the assistance and sympathy of his friendship in his pecuniary embarrassments. Agnes was conscious that he had another reason for quitting England, which she kept an inviolable secret, rejoicing that he had had sufficient delicacy to avoid her presence after his base and unmanly conduct. Still she could not help feeling some degree of astonishment at the pliability of his affections, when she learnt that he was accompanied in his self-imposed exile by a lovely but most notorious figurante of the Opera. Happily for her innocence, she did not know that it was ever thus with the sons of infamy.

'But virtue, as it never will be mov'd
Though lewdness court it in a shape of heaven,
So lust, though to a radiant angel link'd,
Will sate itself in a celestial bed,
And prey on garbage.'

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HARRY VERE.

A PAGE FROM A SPINSTER'S DIARY.

BY MRS. ABDY.

THIRTY springs have exactly elapsed since the year
When I met at a party with young Harry Vere;
He had dark beaming eyes, and profuse ebon hair,
A soft silver voice, and a Romeo-like air;
In the dance none were ever so graceful and light,
And he sang the most difficult second at sight;
He wrote plaintiff odes to a blush and a tear—
Oh! the soul of warm feeling was young Harry Vere.

As a horseman, what crowds to his prowess gave heed,
When he put to its mettle his cream-coloured steed!
He skated—the eyes that his attitudes saw,
By their lustre might almost the Serpentine thaw;
He read all the new novels, he rowed a light bark,
Cut paper, made riddles, and shot at a mark;
The men at his talents thought proper to sneer,
But the women all doted on young Harry Vere.

He walked with me, sang with me, asked me to dance,
And breathed to me words of delightful romance;—
But we parted, new scenes and associates to seek,
And I never beheld him till yesterday week.
How my heart beat with tumult—I thought of past hours,
And rejoiced that I wore my new chaplet of flowers:
I was single, he still was unwed—it was clear
I might yet be the chosen of young Harry Vere.

At length he arrived—oh! conceive, ye who can,
My feelings at seeing a fat, heavy man,
With spectacles placed on a ruby-tinged nose,
Grey-hair, clumsy slippers, and old-fashioned clothes.
His voice had grown coarse, and his manner grown rough,
And he took half an ounce, I am certain, of snuff;—
What a pantomime change at once comic and drear,
In the pride of the ball-room, the gay Harry Vere!

He actually seemed quite impatient to dine—
He spoke of the bees-wing while eyeing his wine—
Talked of pheasants and grouse, of green peas and sea-kale,
Of Birch's mock-turtle, and Hodgson's pale ale—
Prosed on turnpikes, and corn-country squires and their dames—
Had not read the last novel of Bulwer or James—
Thought that consols were high, and provisions were dear—
Oh! what themes for the graceful, refined Harry Vere!

My case widely differs;—the years that have past
Not a shade on my mind or my person have cast;
In fact, I was once a mere miss, I confess,
Untutored in manners, unfashioned in dress;
Now my air and appointments the critic must please,
I have caught the true tone of conventional ease,
And my striking improvement, I very much fear,
To the peace may be fatal of poor Harry Vere.

Oh! horror—a neighbor has dropped in to tea,
And poured in my ear Harry's comments on *me*;

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'What, can this,' he exclaimed, as I quitted the room,
'Be the girl full of artlessness, beauty, and bloom,
Who set my susceptible heart in a flame—
Can this worn haggard spinster indeed be the same!
In her sharp fretful features no traces survive
Of the charms that distinguished the fair Lucy Clive.

'At her bare meagre shoulders humanity sighs,
The crowsfoot has wrought a sad work round her eyes,
False curls flow her garland of roses beneath,
And her dentist, I guess, furnished two of her teeth;
Her jewels and blonde no attraction possess,
Like her bright coral necklace, and flowing white dress,
And her forced feeble giggle but ill can revive
The light-hearted laughter of gay Lucy Clive.

'The arrows of satire she bitterly hurls
At the head of all pretty and popular girls,
And slanders pours forth, as if never to cease,
From those lips that once breathed of affection and peace;
Yet for Pam she reveals passion fervent and true,
And she casts tender looks on her winnings at loo;
What changes the malice of Time can contrive,
What a wreck has he made of the sweet Lucy Clive!'

Well, my tears I have dried—my past days I review—
And I feel Harry's charge is well founded and true;
Henceforth I will aim not at juvenile looks,
But change cards and scandal for quiet and books;
Age still may be honoured if prudently spent,
Though I own it appears a surprising event
That I learn this hard lesson, as wise as severe,
From the flirt of my girlhood, the gay Harry Vere.

MEMOIRS OF AN ITALIAN EXILE.

BY ELI BLACKGOWN, D. D.

CHAPTER XIII.

The Herald.

'Perchè tutti sul pesto cammino
Dalle case e dai campi accorrete
Ognun chiede con ansia al vicino,
Che gioconda novella recò?
Dond' ei venga, infelici, il sapete,
E sperate che gioia favelli?'——

THE honourable members of the provisional government, selected by the free and unanimous will of their fellow citizens to preside over the destinies of their emancipated city, sat around a large table in one of the council-cabinets in the *Palazzo della Presidenza*, engaged in weighty deliberations concerning the promotion of the public welfare; as calm, close, and unconscious of the storms that were gathering upon their heads, as if between them and their enemies mountains, deserts, and oceans, and the whole extent of infinite space intervened; when I, De Negri, the fugitive of Fiorenzola, the messenger of war and strife, the bird of evil news, was suddenly introduced before them.

The president of that august council, Count Lanari, an octogenarian rebel, a veteran of that republican party whose unconquerable opposition allowed Napoleon no rest on his throne, lay, almost reclining, on a huge old-fashioned easy-chair, passively listening to the discussions of his colleagues, almost invariably nodding assent whenever, through mere ceremonial deference, they turned to him for his final decision.

The Count's only son, an amiable and accomplished young nobleman, had been implicated in the Carbonari conspiracy in 1820, and was, since more than ten years, a wanderer in the land of exile. The hoary parent had now hailed the first movements of that insurrection, which promised to restore the beloved outcast to his longing bosom, and gladly acceded to the popular acclamation,

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which raised him to the highest station in our unsettled community; but alas! ere his pressing invitations reached his son on the other side of the Atlantic, the Austrian eagle dashed through that cobweb-work of premature revolution, and the aged president, too old and infirm to provide for his safety by flight, was compelled to surrender to Maria Louisa's satellites; he was thrown into a dungeon, and brought before a military commission, where he evinced a calmness and intrepidity, which commanded the respect of his judges, and won him the regard and sympathy of his mistress, who set him, untried, at liberty. He had, however, scarcely reached the threshold of his house, when he died of a broken heart, at the report of his returning son's shipwreck and death.

On the right of the venerable chairman was seated another patrician of ancient descent, Count Carmagnola, a stately personage, from whom sixty winters had not taken one spark of the fiery spirit of youth, whose large, coal-black, eagle-eyes shone still with an intense, irresistible lustre; a man distinguished more for strength of will than brightness of understanding, more fit to be an agent of despotism, than an instrument of social re-organization in days of liberty. In youth a warrior, a courtier in mature age, he had now embraced the popular cause out of personal resentment and spite. He was rather feared than loved, and indeed scarcely known at all by the people at large, for whom he made no mystery to express his unmitigated, aristocratic hatred and scorn. How he had been chosen to the office he now filled, was a matter of universal wonderment. It seemed as if, *motu proprio*, he had said, 'I have a mind to sit here, and who would dare to find fault with it?'

When the ill-grounded revolutionary edifice fell, and the victorious Austrians entered our town, he stood manfully awaiting them in his palace-hall, suffered himself to be taken before an arbitrary tribunal, made no attempt to deny or palliate his guilt, and defied his enemies to do their worst.

On the other side of the president was a man of colossal dimensions, with the shoulders, chest, and brow of a Titan, Da Costa, a man of extraordinary physical powers, of stormy, terrible passions, of that impetuous but unsteady courage that characterizes men of sanguine temperament. He had been a distinguished financier under the ancient government, and though well known to his employers as most determinately hostile to them, he had been endured and caressed, on account of his administrative talents, and of the important services it was in his power to render to the state.

He was now in his fiftieth year, and as yet exulting in the flower of manhood; but it was obvious to the eyes of well-experienced observers, that the lymphatic was rapidly getting the better of the sanguine element of his robust constitution, that one of those crises was at hand, which have power to shatter the human frame, as it were, at one stroke, and that what was now one of the happiest specimens of animal organization, would in a very short time exhibit symptoms of an equally active and speedy dissolution.

I met him only two years later in Corsica, pining away in loneliness and despondency, reduced to scarcely one-half of his former size, lying helpless and spiritless in his chagrin and ennui, urging his friends at home to solicit his pardon, and reconcile him with his sovereign, lest the respite should come too late, and home-sickness should accomplish its work.

As a contrast to this burly statesman, a pale, thin, diminutive person stood by his side, only in so far a man, that he was clad in a gentleman's garb, and in the choicest, sprucest, most elegant attire of modern fashion; a specimen of the Italian *petit-maîtres* of the old school, one of the few remaining individuals of the *Cicisbei* family, a race now almost entirely extinct—one of those fawning, simpering, grimacing nonentities, which our fair ladies of other times used to carry about with them as something essentially attached to them, something indispensable to their comfort as their fan, their reticule, and Bologna greyhound.

The cavalier Rovalli, *beau garçon*, aged fifty, but to whom a careful toilette, and a naturally feminine countenance, gave a much more juvenile appearance, was, though a most fashionable man, a 'laudator temporis acti.' He wished to bring into vogue, by his example, those happy manners and customs of Italian *serventismo*, which the bitter Parini and the facetious Goldoni had so happily laughed out of countenance, and to which the stormy age of the French revolution had given the *coup-de-grace*. But as, in spite of his rank and popularity, he made no proselytes among our youths, the task of renewing the good old times entirely devolved upon himself, and he was a kind of cavalier servente to the whole female community, at least to all those middle-aged beauties to whom that servile and unmanly courtship of petty attentions and unmeaning compliments could be made still acceptable. As the liberal spirit of the times gained ground even among the ranks of these half-faded dames, it could not fail to exercise its influence likewise upon their suitor and worshipper, and they had launched him into the

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political arena, decked and garlanded with their colours as their favourite champion, not a little glad, perhaps, of ridding themselves for a time of his gallant assiduities.

The two other members then present were Professor Molini,

> ——— 'Per cui tanto reo
> Tempo si volse;'

and with whom our readers ought to be sufficiently acquainted, and Count Jacopo San Natale, a gentleman belonging to the younger branch of one of our highest historical families, a man of very uncommon accomplishments; a poet, a wit, a scholar, and an epicure, accustomed, time out of memory, to take an active part in every political, literary, or culinary revolution of his age. It was reported of him, that when yet a young collegian, he had been shut up at Fenestrelle, by order of the emperor Napoleon, on account of an impromptu satirical sonnet —for the count was a bit of an improvvisatore—on the birth of the king of Rome, which had given so great an offence to the Corsican autocrat, that there was every probability the luckless bard would find him inflexible to the end of time. After, however, languishing in narrow imprisonment for full fourteen months, atoning thus by a month of suffering for every line in his libellous poem, he succeeded at length in softening or bribing his jailor, filed the bars of his iron cage, and ventured to scale the walls of the Alpine citadel; he broke his leg in the attempt, crawled for many miles in the dark, and found shelter and protection among the poor shepherds of Savoy, till he was, in 1814, enabled to reappear unexpectedly, clapping his hands in exultation and triumph, just as the curtain dropped on the last gloomy scene of the Napoleonian drama.

It appears, however, that the governments of 'the Restoration' found no better favour in the eyes of the venturesome count. For he was apprehended and put under arrest as a conspirator at Milan in 1816, banished, as a jacobin, from all the continental states of his Sardinian majesty in 1818, 'admonished,' and ordered out of the ecclesiastical dominions as a freethinker in 1819, and finally arrested and sent to the fortress of Compiano with the other Parmese carbonari in 1820.

The credit and influence of the venerable Count Stefano, the head of his family, at the court of Maria Louisa, soon, however, obtained the release of his wayward kinsman. And as, warned by his friends and connections, and sobered down also by age and experience, the count betook himself more exclusively to literature and solitude—solitude which he, however, took good care to share with a sweet partner, fair and pure as an angel—'a change came o'er the spirit of his dreams,' a new man sprang up in him; a sudden revolution took place in his thoughts, feelings, and habits; he became fond of home, rest, and comforts, and appeared as well pleased with himself, the world, and its enjoyments, as he had been previously disposed to fret and murmur; he became a thoroughbred, and—as the Yankees have it—*the whole-hog-going* optimist.

Yet, though he had brought himself to think that Maria Louisa was, on the whole, a very good woman, her ministers a very clever set of people, and Austrians altogether very kind and lenient taskmasters, and even to look on the bright side of the Jesuits—though what side of these worthies may be said to be less dark, Heaven knows best—yet, on the first uproar of an insurrection at Parma, he was, by popular acclamation, disturbed from his benevolent reveries, and, thanks to his former reputation, deemed one of the fittest instruments of national regeneration; so that he was, according to the revolutionary phrase, 'compelled to volunteer' his services.

There was something noble, bright, and beaming in his countenance, on which the characteristics of high birth and superior intellect were happily blended, and the long-flowing *zazzera* which, in spite of fashion, he, as a poet, claimed the privilege of wearing, Apollo-like, down to his shoulders; black once as a raven's wing, and soft and glossy, so as to cause a pang of envy in more than one fair woman's breast, now somewhat dappled by sundry streaks of silver, but no less rich and luxuriant; and the trick he had of tossing it backwards as he spoke, with a certain graceful majesty, contributed to give this singular personage a highly aristocratic mien, while his rather rubicund than rosy cheeks, the numberless and almost imperceptible lines that furrowed the *contour* of his mouth, and the twinkling and swimming of two small, black eyes, more than slightly affected with myopy, betrayed the latent symptoms of that exquisite epicurism, of which, I am grieved to say, gluttony formed the most prominent feature.

Such were the men, to whom, for want of better, it must be permitted to presume, the safety of the commonwealth had been provisionally entrusted; and to them, therefore, was due the first report of that sudden calamity, the consequences of which seemed likely to have so great a weight on the destinies of the country. I had already been introduced to all of them, with great solemnity, by my friend Brandi, and had taken

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leave of them, previous to my setting out for my short but eventful campaign; so that they seemed rather surprised than pleased at seeing me back in so short a time, and their foreboding hearts, perhaps, prepared them for the worst.

'Well, De Negri,' said Da Costa, who, however slight our acquaintance, availed himself of the privilege of his age and station, to *thou* me, with that tone of familiarity which in Italy implies affection and cordiality, and which is utterly unknown in England, unless it be among the honest and respectable community whom the profane designate by the appellation of Quakers—'What good wind brings thee back from Fiorenzola?'

'War! war! my lords!' was my answer. 'The Austrians have cut our little band to pieces, and are marching at full speed against you.'

There was an air of truth and earnestness about me that left them little doubt as to the veracity of the report, and struck them dumb with astonishment. However inaccurate or exaggerated my statement might have been through terror, they felt that something amazingly strange must have happened.

Count Carmagnola was the first to recover from his surprise. 'The Austrians!' said he. 'Come, come, young gentleman, are you sure you waited long enough to look full into their faces? Have not our valiant youths, like Don Quixotte, mistaken a flock of sheep for a host of warriors.'

'My eyes have seen them, my lord, and my sword has cut its way through the thickest of them,' I replied with some indignation, unaware of the inopportunity of that silly bravado. 'If your lordship would only look out of that window, you will see the Hungarian horse which I took from them in exchange of the brave steed that was killed under me.'

Da Costa stepped forward to the window.

'Leave the lad alone, count,' said he, as he joined his colleagues. 'He is a bold and determined fellow, and not to be frightened by scarecrows. 'Gad, but these are the trappings of an imperial hussar, or I never saw one in my life.' Then turning to me, 'Come,' said he, 'art sure there was no disguise? art sure they were Austrians in flesh and bone?'

'Austrians they were,' I replied; 'and they fell upon us in too great a number for us even to dream of resistance.'

Here I gave as precise and minute an account of the nocturnal skirmish, as, under all circumstances, might be expected.

The *financier* hung down his head, and mournfully replied, 'If all this be true, we had better throw down our cards, and give up the game.'

There followed a dull pause. It was evident they were all unprepared for the sudden news, and the boldest of them were at a loss how to act or what to say in that dreadful emergency.

'You are at liberty to retire, young gentleman,' said Count Carmagnola, mustering up as much of his dignity as he had left 'We are about to enter into weighty deliberations which admit of no witnesses.'

I bowed and prepared to withdraw. 'And,' he added, 'you will easily perceive how unnecessary it would be to divulge an event which might only spread alarm and confusion among the people, until, at least, government has taken the opportune measures.'

Once more I bowed and left the room. I found a formidable crowd at the door, but was suffered to make my way unmolested, and to throw myself on my horse; but no sooner had I moved towards home, than I found my progress obstructed by the waving multitude, who cheered me wildly and tumultuously, and loudly asked for news.

'The Austrians!' 'The enemy!' 'Where did you leave them!' 'How many are they?' 'Which way are they coming?' 'Good God, what will become of us?' 'Hurrah, hurrah! to arms!' 'We will fight for our homes and country.'

In the midst of these discordant outcries, other cries were heard, more shrill, more heart-rending and piercing, from men and women of all classes and ages, who strove to open their way through the crowd, and threw themselves inconsiderately before my charger's hoofs.

'My son! my boy! my darling! what became of him? Dead? wounded? prisoner? You left him in the midst of the strife, and thought of no one but yourself.' 'Where is my Pippo?' cried an old woman, in whom I recognized the mother of my friend Galli, the amourer, 'he was so madly devoted to you! he would have thrown himself into the fire for you! And you come back without him!'

I turned round to retort the bitter reproach, but long before I could utter one word the old woman had disappeared, borne away by the human tide. Other faces innumerable came staring around; other questions wild, incoherent, angry, were put to me, till, in my anxiety to satisfy them, I was fairly overcome. In this stress, and completely locked up in the ever-increasing throng, I proceeded from the Palace to the *Piazza Grande*. Wide as it was, the mighty area was all swarming with human beings.

Here one of my father's servants having

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fortunately thrust himself forward among the rest, I threw him the reins of my horse, and alighted, hoping thus to be better able to disappear among the crowd. Never was I more in danger of being squeezed to death. My good fellow-citizens, no longer kept in awe by the iron tread of the horse, rushed upon me, like the waves of the ocean as they close on a sinking vessel, and I began already, with all my heart, to wish myself back to Fiorenzola, even if I were to be hewed to pieces by the Austrians; when, in good time, an angel,—for I can never think so happy a thought sprang from human head,—an angel cried out, in a stentorian voice, 'Alla Tribuna!'

'Alla Tribuna! Alla Tribuna!' immediately re-echoed all round, and in less than I can tell it, a mighty current bore me to the main door of the *Palazzo del Governo*, an old building rising opposite to the town-hall, and destined as a residence for the governor of the district of Parma; I was hurried up stairs, and there I stood, followed by as many as could find room after me on the central balcony of the palace, under the town clock, a kind of *rostrum*, formerly opened only for the promulgation of laws, edicts, &c., now the pulpit from which our demagogues were wont to deliver their fiery harangues, and emphatically called *la Tribuna*, or *la Ringhiera*.

There was an appalling silence. I looked down. More than ten thousand faces were turned upwards. I gazed far and wide upon that ocean of heads; I held fast by the rail of the balcony, and stopped to take breath. But my awe and trepidation lasted only a moment. My spirit rose within me; I looked down again and confronted the immense crowd with a smile of security. I crossed my arms and waited, as if to laugh their impatience to scorn, and when I finally opened my lips, I felt as little regard or fear for the many-headed monster, as if I had to deal singly with each of them.

'Countrymen,' I began.

'Speak louder! speak out!' cried the sovereign populace.

'By God!' said I, 'I am not going to strain my lungs for your sakes.'

'Countrymen,' I repeated, and as there reigned a more profound silence, it appeared that my voice, none of the strongest, reached the remotest part of the audience. 'Countrymen, the Austrians have violated the non-intervention.'

A universal cry of astonishment.

'They have fallen upon us by night, like cowardly wolves; they have killed many of us, and taken the rest.'

A general shout of horror and indignation.

'A few of us have carved out their way by the might of their sword.'

'Hurrah!'

'Others have fought like men to the last. All is lost but our honour.'

'Viva l'Italia!'

'Countrymen, the Austrians are marching upon us. Be men—be worthy of your name. If you are Italians, to arms! Avenge your brothers, or die for your country! To arms, Italians—to arms!'

As I said this, a genuine enthusiasm raised me for a moment above my former self; I grasped the hilt of my heavy sword, and unsheathing it, I waved it, like a maniac, above the dazzled multitude. It was the same good old rusty falchion, which, it will be remembered, had so indifferently answered my expectation in the hour of need, and was broken in the short scuffle from which it was my good luck to escape unscathed. The act in itself had something bombastic and ludicrous. It had, however, a better effect than it could have been in my power to foresee.

The crowd uttered a deafening yell. 'To arms! To arms! Viva l'Italia! Viva de Negri! He has shattered his sword on an Austrian skull! Italians have arms and breast to fight as well as the Germans! Home, home, for your muskets! To the Pilotta! The muster is under the porticoes of the Pilotta.'

Saying this, the mighty assembly disbanded, and even those very obliging friends, by whose persuasive manners I had been hurried to the balcony, and who had thronged in after me, deserted their post in the anxiety to join the multitude, so that, being left almost alone, I was able to effect my retreat at full leisure.

As I descended the wide staircase of the palace I was stopped by a young officer in full uniform, in whose short legs and long rapier I recognized my old acquaintance Captain Roderi, *vulgo dictus* 'Capitan Buggerino.'

I really am ashamed to be obliged to refer back my readers so often to the foregoing chapters of this story; but however uncertain I be as to the number of readers who may have had the perseverance to follow in its progress the narrative of my early life, I cannot, without rewriting and reprinting all that has been written and printed, but take it for granted that everybody knows Captain Buggerino to be the same gallant, polite, and accomplished personage already introduced, described, and characterized in chapter second, as the bearer of a challenge, and second to my adversary, the advocate Obizzi, in a duel that took place in the vicinity of Selva Piana, in August, 1830, a few months before the

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ever-memorable events of our college riot, and my subsequent arrest and imprisonment. The same Captain Buggerino now stood before me on the landing of the main staircase of the *Palazzo del Governo*, with his most fascinating smile playing on his lips, and with an inflection of his elegant person, which resembled more a lady's courtesy than a military salute.

'Glad to see you under more auspicious circumstances than when we last met, Signor de Negri,' said he. 'May I trouble you to follow me? Colonel Fuseli wishes to have the pleasure to see you.'

'I am at your orders, sir,' I replied; and after following him through four or five wide apartments, I was led to a very small cabinet, where the commander-in-chief of the national guards was dictating orders to three or four of his aides-de-camp. Buggerino had the honour to belong to his staff.

The colonel was a tall, square-built veteran, rather above sixty years of age, but still hale and vigorous, and able to bear the toils and hardships of war. He had the reputation of having been a brave soldier in the good old times, when the soldier's trade was in the highest repute. He had, however, risen no higher than the rank of *chef-de-batalion* under the French government, and the degree of lieutenant-colonel had been but lately conferred upon him by Maria Louisa's munificence, when he was kindly invited to retire, and rest under the shade of his laurels, or, to speak more plainly, to starve on half-pay; and as the poor veteran was encumbered with a formidably large family, and Maria Louisa's salaries, even when at the full, were none of the most splendid, he found himself beset with difficulties, the gordian knot of which, he fancied, could be best cut asunder by the sword of the revolution.

Hence had he been for many years a notorious malcontent and grumbler; and to these qualities, especially during the first ferment of popular insurrection, he owed his exaltation to that supreme command, for which he had in reality neither true moral valour, nor capacity, nor strength and generosity of character. The people had, as in the case of the members of the provisional government, sadly repented their choice, and especially when they saw their *generalissimo*, who having always served in the infantry, scarcely ever dared to venture on saddle, inspecting their militia ranks on foot, they felt for him that feeling of contempt that the French evinced towards Louis XVIII. for the same reason, and which more, perhaps, than any other more serious cause of discontent, contributed to render his government unpopular, and led to the sudden catastrophe of the *cent-jours*.

'Who gave you leave, sir,' began the colonel, 'to address the people from the balcony, to excite them to tumult and violence?'

The colonel's features were finely and regularly shaped, and his weather-beaten brow had something eminently manly and warlike; still there was a *je-ne-sais-quoi* of harshness and vulgarity about the corners of his mouth and in the tone of his voice, which, joined to the air of reproof he thought it proper to assume, and considering also the state of excitement into which the preceding scene must naturally have thrown me, considerably diminished those feelings of allegiance and respect which I was determined to entertain for every one that was invested with the sacred character of national functionary.

'The leave, sir, or rather, I should say, the order,' I replied with sufficient boldness, 'was issued by that power, which, as I understand, has of late here alone right to dictate; but I should like to ask you, sir, how it happens that in a civilized town, where you dispose of ten thousand national guards, public tranquillity should be so utterly disregarded as to suffer a peaceful, inoffensive citizen to be nearly choked and trampled to death by the populace?'

The colonel shrugged his shoulders.

'The lords of the provisional government,' said he, 'had begged of you not to breathe a word of the untoward event of Fiorenzola to any living soul, and you hasten to promulgate it from the *Ringhiera* before a crowd of fanatics, as if we had not trouble enough to keep them quiet already.'

'I had the honour to tell you before that I acted under the most brutal compulsion. But if you are determined to find fault with my conduct, I am a national guard, and as such amenable to your martial laws; allow me, therefore, to tell you that your reprimands are as useless as they are unjust and unseasonable.'

The colonel smarted and winced.

'You have your leave to retire, young sir,' he said, bowing haughtily. 'Remember, however, that while I continue to fill this dignity, the whole town must be brought to the rule of the strictest military discipline.'

I had no sooner quitted the presence of this would-be absolute ruler, than I was able to perceive what chances he had of enforcing dictatorial sway. I had not been present at the tumults of the memorable 13th of February, and although I had heard of its details from more than one accurate and prosy narrator, yet I had not been able to conceive an

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adequate idea of a town, and especially an Italian town, in a state of popular convulsion.

What I now witnessed was not a revolution, since no strife or sanguinary tumult took place, but the confusion, the hurry, the harum-scarum irruptions of the maddened populace in every direction, and apparently without any determined object, had something truly appalling and tremendous. The tolling of alarm bells, the rolling of drums, the shouting of men from the streets, and shrieking of women from the houses, the banging of doors and shop-windows by the terrified tradesmen, and presently the measured march of several patrols and companies, the trampling of horses, the braying of fanfares and fifes, the singing of national anthems, and a few random shots occasionally fired at chance by some of our inexperienced military men,—set up a wild confused clangor, a heaven-storming din, which might have startled the dead from their graves.

In less than half an hour the whole town was under arms, and before I had reached my own domicile every house had poured fourth its own champion, armed and accoutred cap-à-pie, in that wild and motley attire, which, till the government had determined on the shape and colours of a national uniform, was understood to represent the martial dress of our Italian *banlieu*. By degrees the streets became deserted and silent, as our brave militiamen hastened to the place of rendezvous, and women only were seen, half-hidden behind their Venetian blinds, awaiting the result of these startling events in anxious suspense, or calling to each other as if for mutual encouragement.

From the looks and gestures of several of them I was made to perceive that I had become the theme of their conversation, and began to experience all that mixture of complacency and uneasiness which the 'digito monstrari' is apt to awaken in juvenile breasts. That I was not, in that age, utterly insensible to the charms of popular notoriety and fame, the reader must be aware; yet, though I was by no means sorry to hear those good creatures crying 'There he is!' and 'Look at him!' after me, the fresh experience of the dangers of too close a hug from an excited populace had the effect of damping my ardour to a considerable degree, and I had resolved in my mind that, however welcome my fellow-citizens might be to raise my name to the stars, I should take good care another time how I ventured my bones among them. I went home accordingly, and never before, perhaps, did I feel the luxury of stretching myself at full length on my sofa, and lying there for a quarter of an hour, listening to the naïve and nonsensical prate of my sister Louisa, who only appeared to be happy when her eldest brother was at home with her; and though the sense of duty soon roused me from that lulling repose, and summoned me to the muster, yet I lingered on with a listless fondness, as if the fate of my native town, and perhaps of all Italy, had not been, as I then fancied, at stake.

Up, however, at last I started; I changed my dress, wrapped myself in a large cloak, took no arms but my pistols with me—they were the same that I found in the holsters of the Hungarian war-horse I had rode on from Fiorenzola—and thus incognito, I hastened to join my comrades.

The buildings of the Pilotta, reared by the munificence of the reigning house of Farnese in the sixteenth century, were only intended as the accessory premises of a large ducal palace, which the degenerate princes of that proud and guilty race in after generations never had money and perseverance to bring to a close. The edifices still extant encircle two spacious court-yards, surrounded with lofty porticoes, in excellent taste, as well as on the most magnificent scale. One of these quadrangles is entirely occupied by the stables and other offices of Maria Louisa's household. The other contains the ducal library, the gallery and academy of the fine arts, and that famous Teatro Farnesiano, which for its extent and architecture has few or no equals in the world. The porticoes are supported by pillars of prodigious massiveness and strength. The whole fabric (as indeed are most of our edifices in Lombardy) is built of bricks, but of that superior ancient Italian clay, to which time gives all the compactness and solidity not only of stone, but of adamant.

The square of the Pilotta, generally one of the dullest and most silent quarters of our faded metropolis, was now the theatre of a busy and almost gay and gaudy scene. More than three thousand of the élite of our national militia, young men of every class and condition in life, were here convened and mustered in different battalions with tolerable order and discipline. Their dress was, as I have already noticed, rather fantastic and various, but their muskets were kept in excellent trim; and however unskilful some of the young warriors might have proved in the use of them, that long array of flashing bayonets was not without its formidable appearance.

The military bands and drums were silent, and a vague and anxious expectation reigned over the assembly. The officers stood in a disorderly group in the middle

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of the square, near a colossal fountain, engaged in grave consultation, and the eyes of every one were fretfully turned towards the Piazza di Corte, whence they awaited the regiment of regular infantry, the commander-in-chief, and the order to start.

As I drew near to this *état-major*, always wrapped in the ample folds of my cloak, I found that the most conspicuous and noisy among the number was my old acquaintance, Count Berardi, whom, it will be remembered, I had seen acting with cool determination at Fiorenzola, and whom I had left beset by the Austrians, with many others of our tirailleurs, at the Osteria del Cervo, and, for aught I knew, killed or taken prisoner by the enemy.

Here, however, he was, safe and sound, gesticulating in his wild and half savage manner, pointing to sundry musket holes in his hat and Spanish cloak, and relating, with all the warmth of his demagogical eloquence, the action in which he had been hotly engaged.

It appeared that, after firing the carbine which, as I saw with my own eyes, had struck brigadier Anselmi dead under the walls of the inn, and after having routed and dispersed the body of Hungarian cavalry which that ill-fated carabineer led to the assault, the count, unable to subdue his mettlesome spirit so as to bide within doors with his comrades, had sallied forth alone into the dark, beleaguered streets of Fiorenzola. He had met and seized Anselmi's good charger, which, after its rider's fall, wandered loose and affrighted about, and, once mounted, he had set out at full speed in quest of adventures. He could not fail to have plenty of business in that night of terror and alarm. He was fired at by whole platoons of Croatians, fired at, by mistake, even by some of our friends, till, though escaping all dangers with the rarest luck, he began at last to tire of the game. Unable to make his way back to the Stag Inn, which was now completely blocked up with the soldiery, he presented himself, with wary cautiousness, at the different avenues with various success. After having been repeatedly repulsed from several quarters, he rode to one of the most sequestered parts of the town, to which the din of war had not hitherto arrived, and where the Austrians stood resting on their muskets, cursing the ill luck that had stationed them so far from the scene of action.

The count was challenged by the sentinel as he drew near; but as he had long resided in Germany, and spoke the language of that country as well as his own, he was not only enabled to utter the watchword with the true accent of a native, but, with the greatest *sang froid*, rode up to the gazing soldiers, dictating orders with the greatest volubility, and giving himself the airs of a field officer taking the rounds of the encampment. The fanciful chacko and martial cloak he wore, and the darkness of the hour, rendered the delusion complete, and he proceeded between man and man along the whole line of Austrian infantry, till he found himself in the open country, and gave his horse the spur. The German officer commanding the detachment had alighted from his horse, and was resting, perhaps slumbering, on a stone bench by the roadside, while one of his men held his trusty charger in readiness by the side of him. Roused by the tramp of the galloping fugitive, and by the clamour of the astounded sentinels, who began to recover from their stupor, he jumped on saddle, and rode on the track of the count.

The Austrian was the best mounted of the two, and, after a short race, Berardi, closely pressed, felt the necessity of facing his pursuer. He wheeled his horse round, and, unclasping his cloak, he threw it on his left arm, and with drawn sword confronted his antagonist.

There ensued a short but deadly engagement.

The imperial officer had pistols at his saddle, but neglected, or perhaps scorned, to use his advantage. His first blow fell heavy but harmless on the folds of his adversary's mantle. But the count was more successful. He bent his head nearly on his horse's neck, and dealt so fell and desperate a blow, that, as the German raised his right arm above his head to parry, it struck the sword and the hand that held it to the ground.

The blood sprang hot and copious from the mutilated wrist, and the horse, half blinded, and wholly startled, by that gory shower, drew back, plunging and rearing with such a fury, that his ill-fated rider, disabled by his wound, and, as Dante has it,

'Levando il moncherin per l'aria fosca,'

suffered himself to be borne back to his friends.

The count's recital, which some of us were inclined to look upon as an idle vaunt, turned out to be strictly correct. His antagonist in that equestrian rencounter was the youngest son of a Transylvanian prince, only twenty years of age, and, no more than three months back, had entered into the Austrian service. The rapid loss of blood, and the want of opportune assistance, so dangerously exasperated his wound, that he died of the consequences of it in the course of that same day at Placentia.

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The epic interest attached to the narrative of his nocturnal exploit could not fail to add new importance to the character of a personage who stood so high already in the estimation of his brothers in arms. The particulars of his adventures were circulated with wonderful rapidity throughout the whole line of our combatants, and became none the worse for a few light touches of high colouring which the fertile imaginations of his admirers added to it.

'And now, ye pack of marmots and hinds,' said the gallant count, whose eloquence, like that of Demosthenes, rather consisted of objurgation and reprimand than cajolery or adulation, 'now, ye deluded fools, what do ye mean to do? How long will you suffer yourselves to be led by the nose by that set of trembling dotards whom ye have, in an evil hour, trusted with the safety of your country? Bestir yourselves! The Austrians will be at your gates by sunset. Will you let them in in the dark, and be caught by them asleep in your beds, like dogs in your kennels, till they dislodge you by fire and sword, as they did at Fiorenzola? Waiting for Colonel Fuseli, are you? Why, by this time, he is perhaps a hundred miles off, to'—I must give a literal translation of the coarse but expressive phrase—'to save his belly for the figs of next summer. But if you are in want of a leader—if you, like the Austrians, are a soulless body till you receive your corporal's orders—here am I: follow me; I know the way; and I hope by this time the Austrians, my good friends, know me too!'

Saying this, he broke from the circle of officers he had thus been addressing, and, brandishing and flourishing his sword before the assembled militias, 'Now I'll show you,' he said, 'how these good lads are to be spoken to.' Then he bawled out, in that cracked, shrill, but powerful voice that was so peculiar to him,

'*Attention!*'

They started—or rather, since, notwithstanding my antipathy for the French, for their language as well as for their country and nation, I am forced to confess that it has words for which I can find no equivalent in other less nasal and more human tongues—*Ils s' ebranlèrent.*

Our men shouldered their guns with right good will, fell back in their ranks, and stood still, like a breathing wall, acknowledging the authority of their self-constituted chieftain.

'*Colonne, portez armes,*' continued the count with increasing boldness. The commands were then, thanks to the unnational fondness of our Napoleonian veterans, given in French.

'*Colonne, en avant—marche!*' cried the new general, moving on foremost towards the Ponte Verde, or Green Bridge, whence was the road to Placentia.

Drums and trumpets gave forth their signals, the officers hastened to their posts, and the mighty column moved forward.

In this emergency, Colonel Fuseli made his appearance from the other end of the square.

CHAPTER XIV.

The Bivouac.

'Italia volle,
Volle un istante—e disperò.'

Had the worthy commander-in-chief, Colonel Fuseli, broken his leg, or, at least, sprained his ancle, so that he might either never appear, or arrive too late on the square of the Pilotta to interfere with our departure; or otherwise, if he were to be there in good time, had he better understood and seconded the spirit by which our youths were animated—had he praised their ardour and zeal, ordered out his regular forces, which were comfortably quartered at the citadel, and thus, with his whole host, marched against the Placentine garrison—it would be difficult to ascertain the probable result of the expedition.

The short but well-fought scuffle of Fiorenzola had demonstrated, beyond all shadow of doubt, that our young people could, in the hour of need, fire a gun or handle a broadsword. All those who had been immediately engaged in that action had exhibited as much determination and steadiness as might be reasonably expected from the best trained soldiers, and their present state of exasperation and excitement, if properly acted upon, might have wrought wonders; while the Austrians, on the other side, unwilling as we are to call in question their military valour, had, even in that nocturnal encounter, where everything was calculated to inspire them with utter security, evinced an indefinable awe and hesitation, naturally arising from the consciousness of the false position they stood in in our fettered but not subdued country, and of the treacherous and slippery ground on which they trod.

Had the camirado of Fiorenzola been considered as a most decided violation of the non-intervention, and an open declaration of war; had only our national forces, with or without the assistance of our natural allies and brothers of Bologna and Modena, been brought to meet the Austrian troops in full daylight, in a wide-open field; and were

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even the Italians as pusillanimous a race as foreigners are fond to believe and style them, so that we could not expect as brilliant a success as the ragged Parisian mob obtained at Jemappes and Valmy over the best troops of the continent; had only a few hundreds, a few scores of us, died, like men, with their faces turned towards the enemy, for the sake of Italy—an unheard-of event since the days of the Lombard league—I should not, perhaps, gentle reader, be here now speculating on 'ifs' and 'buts' and writing these silly memoirs for your gratification.

Fate had decreed otherwise.

The column had not proceeded three steps, when 'Halt!' cried Colonel Fuseli with a voice of thunder, and the column stood waving to and fro, like a field of green corn under the blast of the summer breeze.

'Well, and whither go you, national guards?' shouted their commander-in-chief, 'without waiting for orders? Do you thus abandon the town that relies on your defence? What know you of the enemies' moves? How can you say whether they are coming from east or west? Are we here all leaders and rulers? Who remains to guard the town while you sally forth on your fool's errand? Halt! halt! we have sent our gendarmes to reconnoitre. When we know better on what ground we stand, we shall all start together. He who stirs one step further is a traitor to his country.'

There was something rational in what he said. The Austrians were but ten or twelve miles from us, all along the line of the Po, ready to fall upon the unprotected town at an hour's warning. The statement of that well-known fact had the force of a hundred arguments. The national champions stood abashed and irresolute, and even their riotous and presumptuous ringleader, Count Berardi, looked downcast and discountenanced.

The colonel availed himself of that precarious advantage, and proceeded to emanate his orders. 'Call out ten patrols, each composed of a hundred well-intentioned young men'—(*Giovani di buona volontà*)—it was the phrase of the day—'let them scour the country in every direction for five or six miles around our walls. The main body of our troops shall *bivouac* under these porticoes, to take their turn with their comrades, and keep themselves ready for the worst extremities. Meanwhile we shall be better enabled to ascertain the enemy's intentions. This is likely to be a busy and perilous night. The country expects every man to be awake and active. Brave young men, your commander-in-chief takes up his quarters here amongst you.'

Having said these words, the valiant colonel withdrew to the great vestibule of the ducal library and academy, where he established his head-quarters. He called all the officers round him, and gave the necessary directions for our nightly encampment.

Soon the porticoes of the Pilotta presented a various and animated scene. The ten detachments of volunteers were picked out from every rank, and started one after another for their different destinations. The others crossed their guns, or, as they called it in French, *formèrent les faisceaux*, and made other accommodations for the night. The stables and other storehouses of the duchess's household were close at hand, and some of our marauding young soldiers were tempted to invade those hitherto unviolated establishments, and returned with cart-loads of straw and firewood, with which they flattered themselves to have provided comfortable beds and warmth for what promised to be a cheerless and dreary winter-night.

They soon found out, however, that they had too hastily reckoned without their landlord. The colonel broke out in the most vehement invectives against their disloyal and sacrilegious conduct, declared that they disgraced the cause of liberty by jacobinic deeds of pillage and robbery, and prevailed upon those good, dutiful militiamen to take back and restore the stolen goods to the premises of their dethroned sovereign.

It was not written, however, that their pliancy and docility should defraud them of such comforts as were compatible with their soldierly duties. A few gentlemen, residing in the immediate neighbourhood, stepped forward, and with due submission to the irritable chieftain, obtained leave to supply, out of their own stores, the articles which the defenders of the country stood amazingly in need of. Besides fuel and fresh straw, basketsful of cold meat, eggs, and other eatables, were sent, and wine in greater quantity than, for any other but an Italian soldiery, would have appeared compatible with the maintenance of discipline. Thus, at close of day, the whole area of the Pilotta was turned into a vast banqueting hall, lighted by glaring watchfires, and cheered by war-songs, our people having, in the novelty of the scene, with true southern light-heartedness, forgotten all their excitement and consternation of the morning.

Fresh arguments of congratulation and rejoicing contributed, at every moment, to keep up their spirits and prolong those hours of revelry which either their own good sense or the orders of their rulers ought to have made them aware were better employed in recruiting their forces by a few hours of sleep, so as to be prepared for the events with which the future seemed to be ominously pregnant.

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The disbanded fugitives of Fiorenzola, both those who had escaped among the tumults of the first attack, or effected their evasion after the conflict, arrived in several small detachments, according as they had met in their disorderly retreat, and with one accord directed their steps towards home. Among the first was Count Berardi and Pippo Galli, the circumstances of whose flight I have already related; then others and others successively made their appearance, until, before daylight, it was plainly ascertained that no more than fifty were missing.

Each of these had his own share in the action, his own personal exploits and adventures, his own hair-breadth escapes to tell of. Each of them thought he had arrived first, and had the freshest news to communicate. Each of them entertained the most exaggerated notions as to the extent of our losses in that sudden disaster. They all were sure of a large, eager, inquisitive audience. Notes were compared, facts verified or discredited, news were circulated, weighed and sifted with the most sagacious criticism. Men who had been reported as dead, wounded, or prisoners, suddenly appeared safe and sound among the wondering assembly, by their presence interrupting and belying the mournful recital. There was an infinite deal of embracing, kissing, and shedding tears of joy. To so many strange and extravagant emotions had given rise the petty incidents of that poor skirmish; and that, too, among a people, who no farther back than twenty years ago were accustomed to see hundreds of thousands of the flower of their youths torn asunder from the clasping arms of their mothers, and starting for a long, dreary pilgrimage to the northern deserts of Russia, from which only a few blighted, frost-bitten, mutilated wretches were ever to return!

Those who had outsped their comrades in their precipitate retreat, arrived, as I did, under the impression that the Hungarians must be riding close at their heels, and the alarm which my first appearance had created was, for many hours, constantly on the increase. But when it began to be positively ascertained that the enemy had never ventured beyond the Stironne; that even their vanguard had been called back to their standard, and finally that before noon the whole host had quitted the invaded town of Fiorenzola, and repaired to their stronghold in Placentia, it became a matter of incontrovertible evidence that they harboured no intention of pursuing their advantage any farther, and that our town was safe enough for the present.

These more cheering and favourable conjectures were officially confirmed, when early at daybreak the weary host of our anxious militia were roused from their pallets of straw, and Colonel Fuseli appeared among them, proclaiming, in the name of our provisional government, 'that it was full time the good citizens of Parma should recover from their groundless alarms; that, however thankful they might feel for the patriotic zeal and valour evinced by the national guard on the first appearance of danger, yet they regretted the unnecessary inconvenience to which so many brave youths had been put, in consequence of the hasty report of the unfortunate affair of Fiorenzola; that in their attack of our detachment, the Austrians had only acted in consistence with the rights of nations and the laws of war, which empower every garrison to repulse by main force any armed force that ventures within reach of its cannon, or even within the territory immediately belonging to the town it is intended to protect; that the commander of the citadel of Placentia had full right to consider the intrusion of our volunteers as an open aggression, and, as such, he had considered it his bounden duty to act on the defensive; but that the Austrians were so far from infringing the pact of non-intervention, that as soon as they had regained possession of their invaded territory, they had scrupulously respected the line of demarcation between the two states, and hastened to retire to their own quarters, from which, without our flagrant provocation, they would never have stirred.'

The colonel concluded by thanking the militia as he dismissed them, commending the promptness and eagerness with which they had answered that call, and exhorting them to exhibit no less ardour and alacrity, whenever the welfare of the country should really require it.

Thus did our national troops withdraw to their homes and peaceful avocations, and before sunrise the most perfect quiet and security was restored. I was struck dumb with amazement. 'What!' thought I, as, taking the arm of my faithful Pippo, I walked leisurely towards home, 'what! the non-intervention again! Will then nothing cure these dotards of their illusion? Has the blood of our brave Modesti been spilt in vain? In vain have fifty of our friends been dragged in chains to Placentia? Will our government trifle with the happy dispositions of our youths, till their excitement have time to cool, and their enthusiasm be utterly exhausted; till the selfishness of private affections interfere with the ardour of public spirit; till every one grows sick with despondency and disenchantment? The non-intervention once more! when a man must

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be utterly blind if he do not see that the Austrians are only waiting for reinforcements ere they venture to attack us in earnest!'

Filled with these all but agreeable meditations, I shook hands with my friend rather sulkily, and walked up to my bed-room, where I had not slept for months. I undressed and threw myself on my bed, just as the first rays of the morning sun were making their way through the blinds.

The night had been spent in walking from group to group, and listening to the animated conversation of my comrades at the Pilotta, so that a few hours of rest would have had an unspeakable charm for me; but I was not to be left alone for long; for, no sooner had my heart gone to sleep—as our good people have it—than there was a pull at the bell, and Signor Brandi unceremoniously broke in upon me.

'Well, De Negri, my friend, how are you?' with his wonted, bustling manner. 'Hot work, wasn't it, at Fiorenzola? and a narrow escape we had, thank our stars.'

'Narrow or wide,' said I, 'I am never glad of an escape—from the enemy.'

'Aren't you? How very odd! Would you rather have been taken and dragged to Placentia with a rope round your neck, and the prospect of being shot before you, like the poor devils, our friends?—Well, De Negri, I came to talk to you about it. We have received the most appalling news of our prisoners.'

'Did they hang them?'

'Hang them! Heaven forbid!—Why, you speak of it with as much unconcern as if they were a gang of highwaymen, about to be executed for murder.'

'My dear friend, I contemplated the event of falling, myself, into the hands of the Austrians, though I would rather have done my best to fall by their hands. Had I been taken prisoner, I knew what I had to expect from their tender mercies. I think every one of us ought to be prepared for the worst. In the eyes of our countrymen, we may be heroes and martyrs, but our enemies have full right to look upon us as rebels and brigands.'

'You take rather a philosophical view of the matter. The Austrians, however, know better than that. No! they dare not hang their captives; but they have thrown our poor fellows into the darkest and dampest dungeons of the citadel, and overwhelmed them with threats and ill-treatment.'

'Woe to the conquered,' said I laconically.

'Woe, indeed,' said Brandi. 'Our government, however, is about to take strong measures to soften the hearts of their gaolers, and this is the reason I intruded upon your morning slumbers. De Negri, we want hostages!'

'Hostages! What do you mean?'

'We must secure ourselves of the persons of every one within our reach, whose life may be precious in the eyes of Maria Louisa, or of the vile minions who continue to stand by her at Placentia.'

'Hush!—for shame! Let me never hear of it. It is an unjust and ungenerous, as well as a useless and improvident measure. You will only create mistrust and terror, and never be the better for it.'

'We will, we hope, lay hands upon men of high standing and character in our enemy's eyes, on whom we may inflict such a treatment as our captives meet at their hands.'

'A mean and poor resource! You provoke an enemy whom you have no means, or no courage, to attack. Why were we not suffered to march against Placentia? If you want to retaliate, let us fall upon the Austrians and take fifty of them.'

'We have nothing to do with the Austrians. These prisoners are Maria Louisa's, and our attacks must be directed against her. To be sure, the Austrians are her shield and breast-plate. Thank heaven, however, we have yet power to wound her to the quick.'

'So be it, then,' said I, quite disgusted. 'My voice has no chance to be heard, and my opinion no weight on your deliberations. But, if you are to rely for your success on a reign of terror, farewell. Let me shut my door and never hear of it. You will find it easy enough to wreak your vengeance on the unarmed and helpless.'

'Not so easy as you may imagine. De Negri, listen to me. If the undertaking were not fraught with difficulty and danger, I would not have deemed it worthy of you. Listen, De Negri—we must lay hold of the Bishop of Guastalla.'

'Oh! ha! Well, a priest is no very formidable enemy after all.'

'The job requires address and resolution, I tell you. The prelate enjoys great credit and popularity among the populace of his diocese, nor would it ever be safe to get at him even in the most profound peace. Besides, you have to cross part of the Modenese territory, you know, and there are rumours afloat that the Duke of Modena has effected the conquest of Brescello. We may have to carry off the bishop through the midst of his troops.'

'Good God! and is it in moments of such awful perplexity, when we should all and each of us take the field, that you would waste time and men for no better purpose than catching a bishop?'

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'My dear friend, we cannot meddle with the affairs of Modena without spoiling our own and our country's business. But we must have that prelate to save the devoted lives of our ill-fated militiamen. However, I see what it is — the smell of gunpowder at Fiorenzola has proved offensive to your nerves, and you are afraid of getting into such untoward scrapes again.'

'Devils and furies!' I exclaimed, starting up in my bed, stung to the quick by his galling insinuation. 'If you have no one else for your "job," I am your man. I regard it as a foolish and disgraceful expedition; but I am convinced that my country has more need of my arm than my head. I will not give myself the trouble to think or have an opinion of my own. Let your governors send me an order, I am nothing but a soldier. Let my officers command, and I must obey. Let the responsibility of the deed rest upon them, and I will take care of the execution. Let the order come, and in five minutes I start.'

'Spoken like yourself, De Negri. In course of an hour you will receive your writ, and a few friends who are to be the sharers of your daring exploit. Farewell — you are aware that such an enterprise requires expedition and secrecy. Good-bye — you know that you had occasion more than once to be glad that you suffered yourself to be guided by my experience. Adieu!'

I shook my head with dissatisfaction as he withdrew. I was about to embark, and to become the principle abettor and agent of government, in what I considered mean and unprincipled conduct: and though I tried to stifle all scruples by looking upon myself merely as a tool in the hands of the established authorities — though I was rather flattered than otherwise by the confidence placed upon me for a transaction which might indeed require no little discretion and valour, yet I could not help wishing that my discernment and courage might be tried on a more noble and worthy achievement. However, I was in for it, and, dressing in haste, I set about reloading my pistols, and making other necessary preparations.

The bishop of Guastalla was a German by birth, though from what part of the country he came, and what his name was, I never took the trouble to ascertain. But I remember to have seen him often walking alone in the Giardino Ducale, with red stockings and white cravat, when he filled the important station of chaplain and confessor to her majesty Maria Louisa. She had brought the young abbé from the court of Vienna in 1816, and he had been for several years so much of a favourite, that, as he was tall, fair, and blooming — in fact, the handsomest priest in Christendom — vague rumours were spread about, that he had won the good graces of his fair penitent by other merits besides the holiness of his doctrines, and the eloquence of his sermons. Whatever might be thought of these popular slanders, certain it is, that when, in the palmy days of General Neipperg, the duchess's ghostly adviser was dismissed, ample provisions were taken to administer to his future comforts. The diocese of Guastalla, upon which formerly only an *abbate* presided, was dignified into a bishopric, and Maria Louisa obtained from the condescending pontiff the appointment of her ex-chaplain to the vacant see.

That the arrest of this important personage might bring perturbation and vacillation among the counsellors of Maria Louisa, and have power to soften her heart towards her prisoners, was, to tell the truth, most likely; but that we had any right to lay hands on a neutral, inoffensive person, only because his imprisonment was a matter of importance to us in our present circumstances, was to consult rather convenience than right, and I had need of all my self-denial and sense of duty to persist in my determination to comply with the decrees of government.

In less than an hour the written order arrived. It was delivered to me by my friend Brandi himself, in the shape of a sealed despatch, directed to the municipal authorities of Guastalla. He gave me the names of the seven young amateur policemen that were to be placed under my order, and added that I should meet them at the Porta San Michele, where two post-carriages would be waiting for us, it having been deemed advisable that we should give the least possible *éclat* to our expedition, by parading ourselves through the streets of the town.

I was pleased to see among the names of my comrades that of a young fencing master, a pupil of our poor Modesti, and, like him, esteemed a man of a most determined character. His name was Scrivani, or rather — as his mother had a decided *penchant* for everything that was French, and pretended that her husband's family was of French extraction — D'Escrivan. He was a small, thin, pale man, but gifted with prodigious strength and activity, and was considered by his friends as an excellent fellow, though to my liking, there was something too boisterous and swaggering in his pretended open-heartedness and joviality.

For such an attempt, however, as we were about to take upon ourselves, I knew I could never rely on a more efficient auxiliary.

As I was thrusting my pistols into my greatcoat pockets, and was ready to start, a

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visitor was announced, and I beheld with great exultation my good friend Doctor Caluga, surgeon in ordinary to the castle and garrison of Compiano.

'You come in good time, my dear doctor,' said I, when the first greeting was over. 'The country has need of your service. Have you got your pistols with you?'

'I left them in the holsters, with my saddle and horse, at the inn,' answered the doctor. 'But where are we to go?'

'Tush! never ask, man, or you are not fit to serve our free and patriotic government. Go, get your pistols, and come with me. Obey first, and you shall know better anon.'

He did not stop to inquire any further; but in a few minutes he came back, showed me his weapons, and arm-in-arm we walked to the town gate.

There we found our men and carriages waiting for us. We took our places, Scrivani, the doctor, a young divinity student of the name of Rodani, and I, in the first carriage, whilst the five others, all muffled in their cloaks, and armed to their teeth, mounted the other carriage behind.

And bang went the doors, and crack went the whips, and the horns were blown, and off started the mighty convoy.

MR. MARRABLE'S MANAGEMENT.

Mr. Alexander Marrable, or, by courtesy, Alexander Marrable, Esq., went out from his lodgings in Bloomsbury one Friday morning, and bought himself an unexceptionable new Brussels carpet-bag, with an unimpeachable lock, and a very respectable-looking second-hand portmanteau, not many whits worse for wear. Being in a shopping humour, he likewise turned into some convenient depositories, and fitted himself with a few pairs of dainty gloves, a couple of new stocks after the fashion of the Prince's, a watch-guard, a seal-ring, and some other of those trifling et ceteras which are generally supposed to be necessary for furnishing a gentleman—the process being somewhat similar to that of furnishing an empty apartment.

Having accomplished his specific purpose with specific gravity, Mr. Alexander Marrable returned to his lodgings. Being a young man on whom nature, in manufacturing, had thought it proper to bestow good abilities, he had forgotten nothing—a circumstance, perhaps, the less remarkable, as people with the worst sort of memories generally contrive to remember themselves. But what was more particular, all the shops which he honoured with his patronage had sent home his orders with the utmost punctuality; and the watch-guard, and the gloves, and the stocks, and the et ceteras, actually presented themselves, all most accurately tied up in whity-brown paper, and lying in most loving company with his dressing-table, while the bachelor-like carpet-bag and the very respectable-looking portmanteau were duetting together on the floor.

The fates, or rather the shop-boys, having been thus propitious, Mr. Marrable proceeded to perfect his arrangements. Taking a *quantum sufficit* of those necessary things which gentlemen usually use to make themselves handsome—but we never enter upon the mysteries of the toilette—they are known only to the magical glasses which reflect them; and of course inventories of male apparel—coats, and cloaks, and cravats; and boots, and shoes, and slippers; and dress coats, and frock coats, and great coats; and this, and that, and the other—can have no particular interest for anybody but those whom they most concern. We therefore skip all that, only assuring our readers that Mr. Alexander Marrable forgot nothing that he ought to remember—a most happy circumstance for a traveller—and that his carpet-bag and portmanteau held the whole upholstery of the gentleman's furnishing, and the watch-guard, and the gloves, and the stocks, and the et ceteras, and all.

Having perfected these arrangements according to the best recipe of all the oldest travellers, Mr. Marrable caused the foot-boy who officiated in the establishment as shoe-black-in-chief, and brusher of clothes in general, and everything by turns, and all things upon occasion, to intimate to the nearest cabman that he had occasion for his equipage and his services; whereupon the cabman communicated the same to his horse, and his horse, influenced no doubt by the best motives, manifested a sudden energy of character, and imparted, by an extraordinary impulse, something of a revolving power to the cab-wheels, and lo, they turned round like the world, and thus again, by a happy accordance in the propitious circumstances of the case, Mr. Marrable and his luggage were safely packed in his cab, and his cab flurried off to the coach-office, and the carpet-bag and the portmanteau were safely transferred to the boot of the Seven Oaks coach, and their owner was safely perched on the left-hand corner, and all in due time the whole concern was whirling away, rattling over the stones of the town, and irritating the dust of the country, in such a way that it was perfectly flying in everybody's face in the most disrespectful and disagreeable manner possible.

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Mr. Marrable sat with his arms folded on that coach-top, turning over in the warehouse of his brain all the marketable commodities which it contained. 'I must manage,' said Mr. Marrable to himself, 'I must manage. There is no doing anything in this world without management. Here is an old squire in the country, a rich old fellow. I must find out his weak point, get to the blind side of him, and manage him. It is a great step to get the entrée of the house. Then there is a daughter—I shall soon see what she is like. I must manage her too—but that will be easy enough. All women have so many open avenues, that one only is at a loss which to choose to fool them by—the garrisons are so open, that you might enter them blindfold—blunder in, in the dark. I must pretend to think her clever—the silliest creatures always like to be thought the most sensible; and a beauty—the greatest frights invariably set up for beauties; and accomplished—ah, no doubt she is accomplished!—every little green-grocer's girl is accomplished in these days. Perhaps she daubs, and I shall call it fine painting; or strums, and I must pronounce it splendid playing; or squeaks and quavers, and I must say it is divine minstrelsy; or dances about like an idiot, and I must compliment her on being one of the Graces. I shall soon twist her round my finger; and if she is not altogether too intolerable, and I like the country, perhaps I may make up my mind to take her for better for worse. A man must marry some of these days, and if I don't see that I can hope to do much better, I may as well have her as any one else—that is, if I find that I should like to settle down there—if I like the country, and like the house, and find good shooting—as to liking the girl, that matters but little if all the rest do. I shall manage well enough, never fear—there is nothing done in this world without managing.'

Such were the thoughts that flitted across the brain of Mr. Marrable as the *pro bono publico* conveyance which had the honour of being his triumphal car dashed past milestone after milestone on the highway of our sovereign lady the queen; and what, if Lady Nature had put on her May dress to meet him on the way, and hung the trees with silver wreaths, and attired her train in green, the livery of hope, and carpeted the fields with sun-lit verdure, and gemmed them with flowers, and breathed over all things a living freshness—why, what was all this to Mr. Alexander Marrable? What did *he* care for apple blossoms, and trees, and daisies, and grass, any more than as a little fruit was well enough in its way, and he required hay for his horses; as for anything else, Nature might go begging of her own children on the highway for any admiration he had to give her; or he would leave her to a certain grave steady young man who was sitting on the other corner of the stage-coach near him, feasting his eyes on the increasing loveliness of the scene, and apparently regardless of everything else. In fact, the great difference between the two young men who were on that particular day sitting on the opposite corners of that one identical coach, was, that the one on the right hand was thinking of everything *out* of himself, and the other of everything *in* himself, and the mere trifle of *in* and *out* made all the difference.

'Which is Squire Quaife's?' asked Mr. Marrable, as they began to near the habitations of Seven Oaks; to which inquiry the gentleman that drove replied by a significant gesture of his whip, and a laconic 'that there,' which directed Mr. Marrable's attention to a perfect gem of a country-house lying embowered in a rich plantation, and giving every promise that its master had some sufficiently plenty of the *wherewithal* to support so admirable a *whereabout*.

'Set me down, there,' said Mr. Marrable with a self-complacent air, for he felt that the very fact of being deposited at such a house must enhance his value with the coachman and his fellow-passengers. 'Put me down there,' said Mr. Marrable.

'And me,' said the silent staring gentleman at the other corner of the coach-top, whereat Mr. Marrable stared *at him*.

So down Mr. Marrable got from the left hand side of the coach, and was dittoed in the movement by the gentleman on the right-hand side, and forthwith, on requisition, came the portmanteau and the carpet-bag from the boot, and this was dittoed also: two carpet-bags and two portmanteaus were disinterred from the coach-boot, the one belonging to the right-hand side gentleman, and the other to the left.

So the two gentlemen having given their respective property in charge with the porter of the lodge, proceeded to progress together up a fine well-gravelled avenue to the house, and as they walked side by side, a casual observer would have said there was very slight difference between the two specimens of the species, being much about the same height, the same shape, the same corpulence, the same make, the same mien—in fact, being very nearly a pair, only with some variation in physiognomy, and Mr. Marrable having much the better features of the two, with pretensions to good looks of a stronger character than his companion by a very many degrees.

The two gentlemen entered the house to-

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gether. Mr. Marrable casts his quick eye upon every new object as fast as eyes can be made to move, and everybody knows that that is quicker than rail-road or cannon-ball speed, and was perfectly well satisfied with the inventory that they made out. In fact, he walked on appraising in the most brokerly fashion the whole garniture of the dwelling, and sooth to say, nothing could be much better than its appointments. There was no frippery finery, no sort of apologetical contrivance, but everything was as good as money could purchase, and that is saying a great deal. There was a noble hall, and a staircase that deserved to be called the grand one, and a number of handsomely-corniced doors, which seemed to say that they shut in an equal amount of eligible apartments.

'I'll have the run of the house before long,' thought Marrable as he passed them, and followed the very stately tread of the very model of servant-men, who, with powdered hair and drab and silver coat, and bouquet in his button-hole, and silk stockings, and the brightest pumps in the known world, preceded himself and his silent companion to the door of an apartment, into which he ushered them, and left them to scrutinize for a few moments at leisure.

Mr. Alexander Marrable looked at everything as if he were going to buy it, and hoped he should get it cheap. The ceiling was lofty, the windows noble, the pictures fine, the furniture richly carved, and highly polished old oak, the walls and the hangings of crimson-damask, and the cornices of gold.

'This will *do!*' said Marrable to himself. 'I must have this Miss Quaife, even if she were as ugly as sin on a Sunday. Yes, this will do—I must *manage* to make myself master here.'

At this moment the present master incumbent entered, and the self-elected future one began to take him into consideration as a preparatory step towards securing his own succession. Squire Quaife was neither particularly tall nor particularly short, particularly handsome nor particularly ugly, particularly old nor particularly young; in short, he appeared to be particular in nothing, which we suppose is just that state of happy medium which philosophers have measured and weighed out as happiness, though, for our own part, we, not being philosophers, and not possessing happiness, profess, with the utmost sincerity, to know nothing at all about it. As to Squire Quaife, he would have passed in a crowd as having nothing remarkable about him, and if you lifted your glass at him, or if even you could have put him into a microscope, you would have found nothing but an ordinary face, interlined and intersected by a lot of sly dry lines running in curves and angles, as if their meanderings were the boundaries of that mass of the world of passions which are divided into districts in the human face. Such as he was, he walked quietly into the room in an unpretending sort of way, and looked at his two visitors by turns, who returned the compliment doubly by staring at him together.

'Cut and dried,' said Mr. Marrable to himself. 'Yes, I see—I must proceed cautiously. I must put on the respectful.'

'Happy to see you, gentlemen. Happy to make your acquaintance,' said Squire Quaife. 'You are punctual. I love punctuality; it is like the machinery of a watch—makes everything go right.'

'Punctuality is a virtue which I make a point of practising,' said Mr. Marrable; 'on it depends much of the comfort of life.'

'Sensibly said,' said Squire Quaife. 'And you, sir,' addressing his other visitor; 'you join in that sentiment, don't you?'

'I don't find any sentiment in it,' replied the silent gentleman, 'and I never compliment either myself or any bodyelse.'

'You don't, don't you?' said Squire Quaife.

'Only by accident,' said the gentleman, with a smile; 'one can't help accidents sometimes.'

'Are you never punctual?'

'Yes, sometimes by accident.'

'Then we need not be obliged to you for your exactness to-day?'

'Not at all. I don't like people to be obliged to me.'

'And why not?'

'Because it makes them troublesome. They are always thanking you.'

'Hum!' said Squire Quaife.

'What a boor!' thought Mr. Marrable. 'I have nothing to fear from him.'

'What say you to that?' asked Squire Quaife.

'I say,' said Marrable, 'that they who do not know the infinite pleasure of obliging have lost the greatest happiness of their own lives.'

'Hum!' said Squire Quaife.

'And for punctuality, my dear sir, what would the commerce of our country be without punctuality, and what would our country be without commerce?

'Ay, what?' said Squire Quaife.

'You, my dear sir, who so long and so honourably supported the character of a British merchant, best know by their practice what are its highest virtues.'

'Do you hear that?' asked Squire Quaife.

'It belonged to you,' said the visitor drily.

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'The pride of birth,' said Mr. Marrable, 'fades into nothing before that real dignity, and that vital influence over the destinies of our land, which are centred in our merchant princes.'

'Very useful, no doubt,' replied the opposition guest; 'but I don't see the dignity of buying and selling red-herrings and cheese.'

Squire Quaife reddened, but cleared off a little irritability in his throat with a 'Hum!' Mr. Marrable lifted up his eyes.

The dinner-bell of Quaife Hall rang out. Dinner in the country is a great event in the day; who would think of neglecting it?

Mr. Marrable had unlocked his portmanteau and unclosed his carpet-bag, and with the aid of their contents had beautified himself to the entire satisfaction both of himself and his glass. He was therefore down long before the bell had ceased ringing; so too was his right-hand side coach companion.

As they entered the drawing-room, each of them saw Squire Quaife standing at the lofty window of the other end with a lady by his side. Marrable was rather anxious to see what this doll in silks and satins should be like, and his inquisition was sufficiently satisfactory. She turned out to be a graceful pretty figure, dressed in the present revived old Elizabethan fashion, with the long full skirt, and the pointed body, and a fall of rich lace vandyke drapery disclosing her fair well-rounded throat. A couple of elongated serpent-like spiral-like curls were dangling down each side of her face, and the faint echo of a merry laugh, instantly suppressed, caught the ears of the two visitors as they entered the apartment, and the girl lifted up a pair of piquant black eyes to look at them, and Squire Quaife turned round to introduce his guests to his daughter. Had Marrable at that moment looked at the squire, he would have seen that the sly dry lines of his face were more deeply engraven there than ever, but he had already formed his judgment of the father, and he was now very busily engaged in scrutinizing the lady to whom he had devoted the honour of becoming Mrs. Alexander Marrable.

'My daughter,' said Squire Quaife. The lady dangled her curls, and made something of a movement between a bow and a curtsey. Mr. Marrable bent himself half way to the floor with a look of most entire devotion. The other gentleman inclined his head rather too slightly. 'Mr. Marrable, my dear, a gentleman who did me the honour to wish to consult me on some commercial interests, and whom I therefore invited to Quaife Hall. Mr. Wintringham, my dear, the gentleman who last week forwarded to me a letter of introduction from one of my oldest and best-tried friends, and for whose sake I was most happy to offer him the welcome of my house. Gentlemen, my daughter Helen joins me in expressing her pleasure at the honour of your company.'

Mr. Marrable immediately *looked* all the admiration he could possibly contrive to throw into his countenance. This gentleman was a great adept in the art, and a great admirer of the science of looking. A man who has a pair of tolerable eyes scarcely needs a tongue—he can convey his meaning quite as expressively. Nobody hears what is said with the eyes, and, besides, it does not commit him. We believe there never was such a thing known as an action for damages brought against a man for what he had looked, though we are sure that there ought to have been a great many. Mr. Marrable knew that he was on safe ground with his eyes, and he therefore commenced his campaign with looking forthwith, and, by choosing his position judiciously, ensured to himself the advantage of leading Miss Quaife in to dinner, and sitting on her right hand.

We have already said that Marrable had a good understanding and an agreeable person. With these 'means and appliances to boot,' and actuated by the strongest desire to please, the wonder would have been if he had not succeeded. His attention to Miss Quaife neither slumbered nor slept—she was made to feel that her slightest action or her most trivial want was a matter of the most lively importance in his eyes. As to the squire's whims and fancies, it was astonishing to see with what tact he fell into them, how judiciously he praised, how skilfully he contradicted—half the science of flattery consists in knowing when you are to *dissent*, the other half of course being *assent*.

As for Mr. Wintringham, Marrable found him exceedingly useful in the character of a foil. He was remarkably silent, never praised anything, presumed to blame, occasionally opposed the squire, and contradicted Miss Quaife.

Marrable soon felt that he was in the high way to favour on a macadamized road, or going by steam. Squire Quaife appealed to him for his opinion unceasingly, and fair Helen's pearly teeth shone out in her happy smiles.

'I shall manage them, I see,' said Marrable to himself, exultingly. 'I am going on swimmingly. It is a tide which leads to fortune. I always felt that I had a talent for managing people, and though I have been balked so many times, yet I know that the distinctive mark of genius is, that it never doubts itself. As to honesty being the best

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policy, as the old saw has it, so it is for dolts who have not brains enough to manage better; but truth would be a sad shackle to men of ability. How, for instance, could I manage the old squire here if I were to contradict him as often as I think him wrong, or what sort of sugar-plum could I find to please this little beauty? O no—truth may be all very well for those who cannot contrive good falsehoods, but I should like to know what sort of an affair I should make of it if I stuck close to it here. See how well this neighbour of mine manages with his honesty, contradicting and offending everybody; but I shall manage to get some good even out of him. Playing him off will help me on.'

'For example,' said Marrable to himself, 'now ten to one that he contradicts me.' And then aloud to Mr. Wintringham, 'We smoke-dried townspeople are in danger of envying those who have the enjoyment of living in the country, like our hospitable host here—are we not?'

'Country people are more apt to envy town ones,' said Mr. Wintringham.

'Is it possible that you do not prefer a country to a town life? so pure, so innocent, so happy!'

'I don't like dusty roads and stupid graziers, and I don't like fat women with red faces.'

'What a description of the characteristics of your country and its ladies! Have the charity, Miss Quaife, not to hear him.'

'Not out of charity to me, I beg,' said Mr. Wintringham.

'Then you don't approve of the country, Mr. Wintringham?' said Squire Quaife.

'I like to wake in the country in the morning, and be saluted by its sounds and scent,' said Wintringham; 'for the rest, I don't like its dust, and I don't like its dulness.'

'You forget, my dear sir, that we are now in the country, and in the house of a most hospitable host,' said Marrable; being determined that the point of Wintringham's spleen should not be lost by being inverted.

Squire Quaife's face bore for a moment a very peculiar satirical smile.

'I suppose,' said Marrable, 'that you prefer the aristocracy of Grosvenor Square and St. James's to pure skies and green fields?'

'I confess that I rather admire a condition of real rank, though in these days of liberalism I am in danger of being thought vulgar in my taste.'

'Does he know,' thought Marrable, 'that this Quaife here rose from the dregs?' and then aloud, with an appearance of honest indignation, 'I must speak candidly—I must speak honestly. There does not seem to me a poorer prejudice in the world than that respecting the paltry accident of being born to a title, and making one link of a chain of nonentities. The brat in its leading-strings is the same helpless animal, whether in a cottage or a palace, whether lost in dirt or covered with tinsel, whether he be called his grace the duke, and asked if he be pleased to have a rattle? or, a grade higher, will your royal highness choose to be fed with a spoon? or, on the other hand, whether some Tom or Dick are squalling and sprawling upon a mud floor with the pigs, and told to get out of the way on pain of being kicked.'

'It is hardly possible,' said Wintringham, with a particularly quiet accent, 'to avoid giving the preference to the condition of his royal highness, or even to that of his grace.'

'You jest, sir,' said Marrable, feeling a little angry; 'but, for my own part, I think that the man who labours for his daily bread—'

'Has hard work,' dropped in Wintringham.

'— is of more moral worth than the lords of long descent, who live on the credit and the wealth of their griping, grasping ancestors. I would sooner have the noble satisfaction of having carved out my own position in society, and established the respectability of my own name, and laid up my own fortune, than find myself born to a rent-roll and a title!'

'Sir,' said Wintringham to the squire, 'that belongs to you.'

'Impudent fellow!' thought Marrable.

'Hum!' said Squire Quaife.

'Yes,' said Marrable, energetically, 'I honour the character of a British merchant! I honour commerce! I honour industry! I love to see a man elevate himself!'

'He need not have reminded me of my origin,' thought Squire Quaife. 'If my father *was* a journeyman carpenter, what is that to him?'

'I have a sort of fancy for my birth, I acknowledge,' said Wintringham. 'I can very well endure being tolerably well connected. I have no taste for mushrooms.'

'Matchless!' internally exclaimed the squire to his private self. 'This to me! in my own sight— in my own hearing! at my own table! I must say something to carry it off;' so he spoke with a very red face, 'Quite right, Mr. Wintringham, quite right. Money can buy most things but it cannot buy birth; so I suppose we must put it on to the list with genius and taste, and youth and beauty, things that are not in the money market.'

Wintringham smiled, but Marrable thought that this was a capital occasion for him to ignite; he therefore exclaimed against

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Squire Quaife's putting the thing in the wrong place, with great energy, for the double purpose of proving his own independence of opinion, whilst he pleased his host by undervaluing that which never having had, he never could have.

The dry lines of the squire's sly face had not yet unpuckered themselves, when he said, as if to change the subject, 'Helen, my dear, have the books come yet?'

'No, papa,' said Helen.

Time ambulated on at Quaife Hall very comfortably and easily, neither going too fast nor too slow, and therefore never getting particularly tired. Weariness of time is worse than weariness of all other things. It is no little sin to be tired of our best friend. However, as we said, night and day followed each other in very good marching order. The different individuals of Quaife Hall were all of them wending their own way very comfortably. The squire was tolerably well amused with his two visitors. Marrable was getting used to his satirical smile; he saw it so frequently excited, as he persuaded himself, at the expense of the opposition guest, that he felt a sort of satisfaction in beholding it, and Wintringham seemed very well content for the sly squire to smile as much as he pleased. To say truth, that gentleman used his privilege pretty freely while amusing himself with drawing out the characters of his two guests. As to Marrable, he did his part admirably, constantly eulogising everything that, by the most remote contingency, could be supposed to meet their host's tastes and pursuits, and reprobating everything that appeared to militate against them; he had likewise become quite an adept in drawing out the contradictoriness of his fellow right-hand stage-coach companion, who in the surliness of his nature never held back his opinions, but gave them in all their length and their breadth, seeming to care very little whether he pleased or vexed. Marrable was, too, particularly well satisfied with his own superior share of favour with the squire, who seemed to help him most ably in drawing out the crooked contradictoriness of Wintringham, constantly appealing to him with the question, 'Mr. Wintringham, what do you say to that?' and then turning to Marrable, with his sly dry face and his satirical smile, 'Ha, Marrable, you hear. Now what do *you* say?'

As for Helen, she was always laughing. It was impossible to fix her to anything. If she looked at the squire, she laughed; if she looked at Wintringham, she laughed; if she looked at Marrable, she laughed. Her nature was so all-sunshiny over, that she could not choose but be pleased, and was obliged to be happy.

'Helen, my dear, have the books come?' asked Squire Quaife for the hundred-and-fiftieth time.

'Yes, papa,' said Helen.

'Then why did you not tell me?' said the squire petulantly.

'Only this moment, papa,' said Helen.

Squire Quaife hastily seized the parcel, and fumbled over the cord. It was tied in a sufficiently safe knot; with his knife he cut it in about a dozen different places.

'Here are poems,' said the squire; 'Poems! What do they send me poetry for, I should like to know? Poetry, indeed!'

'O *papa!*' said Ellen reproachfully.

'Half-a-dozen sets of one work!' exclaimed the squire. 'What can they be thinking of, to send me such a dose of poetry?'

'O *papa!*' said Helen.

'As if poetry and men of business could have any suitability to each other. What do you say to that, Mr. Wintringham?'

'I see no reason against it,' said Wintringham.

'A man casting up accounts all his life and yet addicted to poetry! Shipping, and buying, and selling, and underwriting, and yet to be supposed to like poetry! Ha, Marrable? — we generally agree — what do you say to that?'

'Ridiculous!' said Marrable.

'I see no reason why an educated man, though he be a merchant, should not find it a recreation to read poetry, or even to write it, if he can,' said Wintringham.

'You don't, don't you?' said the squire.

'What, such empty trash as this,' said Marrable, taking up one of the volumes.

'I have not yet found it to be trash,' said Wintringham, taking up another.

'Trash! yes, no doubt it must be trash!' said Squire Quaife, with a particularly red face.

'O *papa!*' once more ejaculated Helen.

'I think it possible that you may be wrong, Sir,' said Wintringham. 'At all events it is far too hasty a judgment. *I* think that it deserves to be called poetry. I have already found, in this hasty glance, two or three passages of singular beauty.'

'You have, have you?' said the squire. 'What do you say to that, Marrable?

'Say,' replied Marrable, with a sneer, 'why, I am obliged to say that I cannot compliment him upon his taste.'

'Don't you think it must be trash, Mr. Wintringham?' said the squire fidgeting.

'I think I shall find real poetry,' said Wintringham.

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'*You* think so though, Marrable, don't you?'

'I am sure it is trash,' said Marrable; 'poor paltry rubbish—quite meagre and contemptible.'

'He! he! he!' nervously laughed the squire. 'I wonder what the critics will say?'

'Cut it up, to be sure,' said Marrable.

'He! he! he!' laughed the squire, with a very red face.

'How obtuse this Wintringham is,' said Marrable to himself. 'He has not the sense to see that every word he utters grates upon this old squire most horribly. I managed that poetry affair *well*, and indeed I think that I am getting on swimmingly. Quaife appeals to my opinion every moment, and Helen does nothing but smile.'

The next morning was the one fixed on for the departure of the two opposition gents. Marrable congratulated himself on having obtained an invitation to return, which he had gladly promised to do in a fortnight's time. To show his avidity for the society of his entertainer, he came down particularly early in the morning, found Helen out among her flowers, followed her wherever she went, and made himself as amiable as possible.

As for Wintringham, his conduct up to the very last moment proved an admirable foil for Marrable—he kept them waiting breakfast.

'You keep your consistency to the last,' said Marrable. 'You don't think a morning in the country worth opening your eyes upon. Here we have had such a delightful ramble, and you are at last down to a late breakfast.'

'I have been finishing my volume of poetry,' said Wintringham.

'I sat up late last night, and rose early this morning to do so. I could not persuade myself to leave it.'

'You have, have you?' said the squire, with a slight choking chuckling laugh.

'What, that trash?' said Marrable. 'Now,' thought he, 'he must finish himself with the squire. The man must be almost an idiot.'

'Mr. Wintringham,' said the squire, 'will you pay us another visit? will you come down again this day fortnight?'

'I shall be very glad to do so,' said Wintringham.

'Then come,' said the squire.

'Thank you, I will.'

'Very odd,' thought Marrable. 'What can the squire mean? Ah, I see! he wants to play him off!'

ON CRUELTY TO ANIMALS.

The mighty Lord who sits on high,
Round whom the hovering angels wing,
Enthroned above the starry sky;
To whom the circling planets sing;
Who, in his all-embracing love,
Sustains the sparrow in its flight;—
At whose command the waters move;
At whose word sprang from darkness, light;
Superior Power, who gave to man
His own bright image at his birth,
To rule the lower world—great plan!—
The lord—not tyrant—of the earth,
By the same fiat did decree
A Sabbath day—a day of rest;
No labour on that day should be;—
Such was Jehovah's high behest!
A solemn day, reserved to all—
A holy day—a day of peace,
Which man and beast should disenthral,
When all their toil and care should cease.
God's gift to man!—He too did give
'Good will,' and, with that gift, the tear—
(Soft Pity's high prerogative!)
The inward voice that makes to hear.
And wilt thou, man! his wrath contemn—
Each better, higher feeling still?—
To sufferings sad the brute condemn,
Regardless of thy Maker's will?
Say, wilt thou Heaven's own vengeance dare,
To torture that thou should'st protect—
The beast whom thou art taught to spare—
Yet mercy for thyself expect?
The beast lent kindly for thy aid—
This thy return—to doom to pain?
Who for thy slave was never made—
Blind man! God's will thou dost profane!

W. L.

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THE METROPOLITAN.

No. CXXIV.

AUGUST, 1841.

THE BLUE BELLES OF ENGLAND.*

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXI.

THE PLOT THICKENS—OFFERS OF MARRIAGE ABOUND—LOVE SHOWS HIMSELF UNDER A VARIETY OF FORMS.

'It is over, Penelope!' said Constance, looking very pale, and trembling from head to foot, 'and my fate for life is fixed—I am the affianced wife of Henry Mortimer.'

Though so perfectly prepared for this intelligence, it was not without emotion that Miss Hartley received it; and there was considerable solemnity in the manner with which she replied, 'God for ever bless you, my dearest Constance, and render this most important of all human events a source of happiness to your latest hour!'

The tone and look of Penelope affected the young *fiancés* so deeply, that she burst into tears, and wept upon the shoulder of her friend for several minutes without uttering another word.

'Have I frightened you by the gravity of my blessing, dearest?' said Penelope, making an effort to speak gaily; 'or may I turn Miranda's pretty words upon you, and say "you are a fool to weep for what you are glad of?"'

'It is neither folly nor wisdom that makes me weep, Penelope,' returned Constance, rousing herself, 'for I feel quite aware that reason has nothing to do with it. The sluices of the eyes are a blessed safety-valve, when the heart is over-full, and kindly open themselves for us without our interference. I dare say I shall feel better now.'

'Better? Do you not feel most superlatively happy, Constance, at this realization of all your dearest hopes?' demanded Penelope.

'I do not suppose that anybody feels conscious of great happiness while under the influence of strong agitation,' replied Constance. 'Do they, Penelope? I expect all that will come afterwards. But, at this moment, I declare that I feel something much more like terror than happiness.'

'Terror, my dear child? that is rather a strong word for agitation, Constance. Terror of what?—of solemn duties to which you have pledged yourself?'

'Perhaps so. I hardly know what I feel myself, and therefore am not very likely to explain it very clearly. But it seems to me, Penelope, as if I were astonished at myself for having so suddenly, so vehemently wished to win the affections of a man, of whom I know so little, beyond what all the world knows. Is it possible, think you, that I have fallen in love with this Juliet-like rapidity, because Mortimer is a poet? Is it possible that the enthusiasm for name and fame which I have yielded to, nay encouraged, from a sort of feeling that it was noble, generous, high-minded, and intellectual,—is it possible that this enthusiasm may have deluded me, Penelope? I am ashamed to give utterance to what sounds so like the most contemptible caprice, but I feel as much terrified, to-day, lest I should not love Henry Mortimer enough, as I did yesterday lest I should love him too much.'

Penelope might, perhaps, have been inclined to return a laughing answer to this speech, had not the lip of Constance trembled as she uttered it, and, instead of laughing, she looked at her with great anxiety. But a moment's reflection seemed to remove whatever painful doubts had suggested themselves, and she replied cheerfully, though not jestingly, 'If I have not known you, dear Constance, for a dozen long years, in vain, I may venture to assure you that you have no need to fear the return of the sentiment to which you have yielded. You are incapable of loving lightly, if you love at all. A man less brilliant than Mr. Mortimer might have required a longer time to effect the conquest he has

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achieved—but being what he is, there is no great reason to wonder at the Cæsar-like sort of style of it—especially when the fascination of his passionate devotion to yourself is taken into the account. If you were destined to love this petted poet at all, my dearest Constance, it was impossible you could witness the adoration he has offered, unmoved; or that you could insist upon taking a very long time in replying to a sentiment that has been so frankly and undoubtingly expressed. That the affair has been brought about with more rapidity than I should have believed probable, before we left Devonshire, I will not deny; but it does not follow thence that its result will be less happy. On the contrary, dearest, I am greatly inclined to believe, that quite as much in affairs of love, as of murder—

"If it were done, when 'tis done, then 'twere well
It were done quickly."

So look not so full of doubts and perplexities, fair bride elect! What would the world say, could they see the chosen of Henry Mortimer looking so very little triumphant as you do now?'

'Say,' replied Constance, her cheek kindling into recovered brightness, her drooping eye-lids raised, and her mouth dimpling into a smile, 'they would say, Penelope, that I have the most wayward and ungrateful heart that ever poet wooed, or woman gave! But *you* must not judge thus of me, Penelope—you must make allowance for all the nervous fancies which surely must ever be inevitable upon so sudden and complete a change in all one's feelings, prospects, and projects. Do not believe me capable of ingratitude for a preference which I so well know, in the very depths of my heart and soul, it is equally impossible I should deserve or be indifferent to! If the most devoted admiration, the most unbounded gratitude, and the most ardent desire to become all that he wishes me to be—if this, Penelope, can make me more worthy of the glory that has fallen upon me, neither Henry Mortimer, nor the world whose idol he seems to be, shall have reason to reproach me with ingratitude.'

Penelope looked at, and listened to, her earnestly; but, for the first time during the many years of their intimate acquaintance, felt doubtful if she fully understood the feelings which were working in the features of her friend. The only fact concerning those feelings of which she was quite sure, was, that they bore no resemblance to her own for Markham. Yet so certain was she, that nothing which Constance could do deliberately, could be otherwise than right, that she felt something like a pang of self-reproach for doubting that the man she had promised to marry was loved and valued by her in such a sort as to justify this promise. She could not, she would not doubt it; and happily for the removal of the involuntary anxiety which tormented her, she remembered that, though independent, Constance did not absolutely stand alone in the world, and might reasonably enough be feeling some little uneasiness as to the opinion which might be formed of her engagement by those who were likely to consider a poetical reputation as a less eligible property to make a settlement upon, than a landed estate, or a substantial deposit in the funds.

With such thoughts in her head, she gaily exclaimed, 'Well, my Constance, will it be for you, if no graver objection shall be brought against your engagement with Mr. Mortimer than that you do not sufficiently love and admire him. What do you expect Sir James will say, when you tell him that you are going to bestow yourself and your thirty thousand on one whose income is said to arise more from his bargains with booksellers, than from either house or land? What will your brother say to this, Constance?'

'May Heaven but grant me moderation in the pride with which I contemplate such an income, Penelope, and I shall not greatly quail before any of Sir James Ridley's observations upon it. I do assure you, my dear friend, that my greatest anxiety at this moment arises from the fear that I shall be unable to restrain within the bounds of proper Christian-like humility, the glory and self-gratulation arising from the hope that my fortune, such as it is, may be useful to Mr. Mortimer.'

Before Miss Hartley could set about considering what other cause there might be, less easily answered than the one she had just suggested for the look of anxiety which had pained her, the door of the room in which they had taken refuge was opened by Caroline, who with every feature expressive of mirth enjoyed, and more mirth hoped for, came to inform them that Mr. William Weston was in the drawing-room, the very perfection of youth and elegance in manner and appearance, and inquiring for his 'fair ward,' and his '*belle voisine*,' in accents of such unmistakable tenderness, that it would be much too cruel to think of keeping him waiting for another moment. 'Mamma says,' she added, 'that you told her he had offered to you while we were out this morning, and his returning so speedily gives us all reason to suppose that you *must* have accepted him. Have you been in love with him long, Miss Ridley?'

'How can you talk such nonsense, Caroline?' said her sister. 'My mother was altogether mistaken. Constance never said that Mr. William Weston had offered to her—and it would be exceedingly good-natured in you, Caroline, if you would sit down and talk to him, and make him offer to you, instead of making Constance go down—for I do assure you we were very busy talking of something else.'

'Who was it, then, that you told mamma had offered to you?' said Caroline eagerly. 'Do tell me! O do, do tell me, Constance Ridley! and I will go down this moment and talk to Mr. William Weston about Paris, and his dog Fanfan, for an hour, if you will. Do, do tell me.'

'Only wait till Mr. William Weston is gone, and I *will* tell you,' replied Constance, laughing and blushing in the most provoking manner possible.

'But I shall die if I do not know this very moment,' returned Caroline. 'O Penelope, how can you be so barbarously heartless as not

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to tell me? My dearest, dearest Miss Ridley—I love you dearly, I do indeed! quite, quite as well as Penelope does—will you let me be your bridesmaid?'

'My dearest Caroline!' returned Constance, 'how can you suppose that everything can be settled so in a moment? How do you know, my dear, that your mamma may approve it? Pray do go down to Mr. William Weston, there's a darling girl! and you shall know all about it as soon as it is possible I can tell anybody.' And in saying this, Constance applied a little gentle violence to the slender waist of her young friend, in order to prevail upon her to depart; but Caroline resisted stoutly, girlfully at least, if not manfully, and replied, 'As to mamma, my dear Constance, you must be aware how very much she approves of girls being married, so there is no danger whatever that she should object to my being bridesmaid. It will make Margaretta so mad! How *very* much obliged to you I am! Now then, I'll go this very moment, because you have as good as promised me;' and, without waiting for the rejoinder, the fair waltzer twirled out of the room with a movement lively enough to have been inspired by Strauss himself. But before the two friends had fully recovered the comfortable consciousness of being again quietly *tête-à-tête*, Caroline returned with a message from her mother, which she said had been spoken in a whisper, particularly requesting that Miss Ridley would come down directly, because there was no getting rid of Mr. William Weston without her seeing him.

This message was too peremptory to be refused, and poor Constance, with all her new-blown blushing honours of an affianced woman thick upon her, was obliged to force her overwrought spirits into an appearance of tranquillity while she listened to and answered the inanities of her ex-guardian.

It was soon evident to her, however, that preposterous as appeared to be the ideas which Mrs. Hartley had conceived respecting his intentions towards herself, they were nearer the truth than any which had entered into her own imagination concerning him. He flourished up to her as she entered the drawing-room, and having taken possession of her fingers, bowed upon and kissed them with so monkey-like an imitation of what he remembered to have seen upon some stage or other in the metropolis of *la grande nation*, that Constance, despite the throbbing of her still fluttering heart, could with difficulty receive his salutation without laughing. But the feeling that it was a rustic acquaintance of long standing who stood before her, exposing himself to the observations of Mrs. Hartley and her satirical daughter Margaretta, did him good service, and greatly as she wished that he at that moment occupied any other spot of the known world save that on which he stood, she not only conquered her inclination to laugh, but spoke to him in a voice of kindness, and inquired for his family.

'What can this mean?' muttered Mrs. Hartley to her daughters; 'has he not been here before we returned?'

'It was not him, mamma! it was not him!' whispered Caroline. But ere this information could meet the attention it deserved, Mr. William Weston put an end to all conjecture by gracefully swinging his person round, so as to face Mrs. Hartley, and saying,

'Though perfectly aware, (alas! how painfully!) respected Mrs. Hartley, of the barbarity of the practice which authorizes my request, I nevertheless avail myself of it to ask permission to see this young lady, your present visiter and my late ward, alone.'

'Assuredly, Mr. Weston!' replied Mrs. Hartley, skilfully converting a smile into a cough, and taking the hand of one daughter, and the arm of the other, to lead them with her. 'Assuredly! I feel certain that neither Miss Ridley herself, nor any of her family, would wish me to refuse such a request from you.' And with an arch glance at her young guest, and a graceful bow to her elder one, she withdrew from the room, leaving Constance and Mr. William Weston standing, very literally, *tête-à-tête*.

Constance felt, and probably looked, what is expressively termed *embarrassée de sa personne*,—in plain English, she knew not exactly what to do, or to say, next. But from this painful state of uncertainty her companion relieved her, by taking her hand, and leading her, with a sort of minuet step, to a sofa.

'The divine Constance has been too long acquainted with my passion, and must have been too constantly anticipating its present result, for any portion of surprise to mix itself with the soft agitation which is at this moment swelling the beautiful bosom beside me,' he began, as soon as he had seated himself by her; and then, as if suddenly recollecting himself, he started from the position he had taken, and dropping on one knee before her, continued,—

'Pardon! O pardon me! belle des belles, if the barbarous incongruity of thus making a declaration of love to a demoiselle—an unmarried lady, in short—should have so greatly embarrassed my feelings as to render me forgetful of the only attitude in which such a declaration should be made. But England is England, and its laws and customs must be obeyed, however revolting to the taste or the judgment of a young man habituated to those of a fairer and more genial clime. Can you forgive me for this truly Britannic blunder, my charming friend?'

Constance would not have believed it possible ten minutes before that any possible combination of events could have so changed the current of her thoughts and emotions as to make her laugh, and that too in defiance of civility, and a multitude of other good feelings, all of which would have led her to refrain from it, had it been possible. But it really was not; the sight of this resolute lover, on his knees before her, with his indescribably boyish-looking old face, redolent of the happiest confidence and self-complacency, while he thus politely apologized for not kneeling earlier, was too much for her, and in utter forgetfulness of propriety, and of everything else which might have tended to check such ill-timed mirth, she hid her face with her hands, and did laugh heartily.

For the space of about five seconds, Mr. Wil-

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liam Weston looked puzzled by the merry mood in which his addresses were received; but with that happy rapidity of thought which is perhaps only to be acquired by natures essentially Gallic in their organization, he then started to his feet, exclaiming, with every appearance of ecstasy, 'Ah, charmante! mais charmante! divine! adorable! How beautifully, loveliest Constance, do our natures assimilate! I, *I* whose motto, as you doubtless know, is "*Vive la folie*," *I* have the *incroyable* happiness of finding in the *partie* which a thousand reasons point out to me as eligible, I have the *bonheur* to find the same delicious continental *légèreté* which I so carefully cherish in myself! May we not together thank *le bon Dieu* for a conformity of character *si aimable, si touchant?*'

Constance, very heartily ashamed of herself, now felt it was time to be serious, and rising from her seat that she might be in readiness to leave the room when her speech was ended, she said, 'Most certainly, Mr. Weston, nothing but the appearance on your part of the *légèreté* which you mention, could in any degree excuse such an exhibition of it on mine as you have just witnessed. But now, it seems to me more desirable to speak seriously, in case you should really have intended to convey any serious meaning by what you have said, and I must therefore beg you to believe me quite in earnest when I assure you that it is not, nor ever can be, in my power to return the sentiments which you have done me the honour to express for me.'

So saying, she moved towards the door, Mr. Weston gazing at her the while with clasped hands, and an aspect of the most evident delight, but offering no opposition to her progress, and contenting himself by exclaiming again and again, 'Charmante! divine! mais absolument divine! Ah! que le bon Dieu m'a rendu heureux!'

Hardly knowing whether to think him really mad, or only more youthfully playful than ever, Constance left the room, and sought Mrs. Hartley in her little boudoir.

She found her with her two youngest daughters in close committee upon the subject of the imperfect but very important intelligence obtained from Caroline, namely, that Miss Ridley had most certainly that morning received an offer of marriage, that she had accepted it, that Caroline herself was to be one of the bridesmaids, but that Mr. William Weston was not to be the bridegroom.

Such being the occupation of the party, it may be readily believed that her entrance among them was hailed as a blessing, and that she did not long remain without such proof of the affectionate interest they felt for her, as the most eager questioning could give.

To all they asked she answered very distinctly, and had no reason to complain of being listened to with indifference. Mrs. Hartley was eloquent in congratulation, Margaretta in astonishment, and Caroline in delight.

'You might, doubtless, my dearest Constance, make a better marriage in point of money,' said Mrs. Hartley, 'though, if I mistake not, I have heard that Mr. Mortimer has great expectations from some quarter or other, though I do not exactly know what—but this at least I know, without a shadow of doubt, that no connection you could possibly form, could tend to place you more completely in the very best circle of society that London can offer, than this. Such a man, too! Good heaven! Such a mind! I congratulate you, dearest love, most sincerely, and with my whole heart; and be assured, my sweet Constance, that no friend you have will be more likely to appreciate, or, let me frankly say, will be more capable of appreciating this circle than myself.'

Constance, of course, replied with smiles and blushes to this, as well as to all the moving accompaniments to it which proceeded from the young ladies; but felt herself compelled to bring the conversation rather suddenly to a close, by saying, 'But, dear Mrs. Hartley, what are we to do with Mr. William Weston?'

'Do with him, my dear? Why, all-charming as he is, you cannot commit bigamy for him, and therefore, though of course with great reluctance, you must perforce send him back to his papa and mamma with the dismal news that you have refused him.'

'But he will not be refused, Mrs. Hartley. I have this moment left him, thanking God for having made him the happiest man in the world. I wish you would have the kindness to see him yourself?'

'Do you suppose he is still here, my dear?' inquired Mrs. Hartley with considerable surprise.

'Yes, I do. I am shocked and ashamed to give you so much trouble, Mrs. Hartley, but I should be very much obliged, indeed, if you will make him understand that he had better go, for I am greatly afraid that it is my own folly which has beguiled him into believing that I was not in earnest in refusing him. Do not be angry with me, Mrs. Hartley, but—I am very much ashamed to confess it—I laughed when he made his proposal.'

'Fie upon you, Constance! and you have the conscience to expect that I shall be less inclined to laugh than yourself? But I suppose I must humour you to-day, and will undertake to send off, if indeed he be not gone already.'

So saying, Mrs. Hartley descended to the drawing-room, where, contrary to her hopes, she still found the rejected lover.

'Ah! c'est vous? charming Mrs. Hartley!' he exclaimed as she entered the room. 'Has my fair ward told you what has passed between us.'

'She has, Mr. Weston, and I am sorry for your disappointment. But young ladies of her age, you know, are apt——'

Mr. William Weston suffered her to say no more, and she had only said so much because he was too much astonished for speech himself.

'Disappointed!' he exclaimed at last, '*Leger comme je suis, je n'ose* not enter on a subject so grave as the heart of woman. Ah! it is too deep, too solemn, too profound. But this much you must permit me to say, *mère respectable*, that far from being disappointed, my soul is *noyée* in delight at discovering that the demoiselle who has suggested herself to my judg-

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ment as in every respect the most worthy of my alliance, is *absolument jumelle* to my character by the most striking features of her own.'

Mrs. Hartley stared at him with a look that by no means ill-expressed the astonishment she experienced, but felt more at a loss what to say than was usual with her on any occasion; at last, however, urged by the obvious necessity of saying something, she began—'Indeed, Mr. William Weston, I am afraid—'

'Fear nothing, excellent Mrs. Hartley!' he cried, snatching her hand and kissing it. '*Tout va bien!* Permit me only to enjoy such freedom of *entrée chez vous* as our old acquaintance warrants, and I pledge myself to you, on the honour of a gentleman, that the destiny of your fair young friend shall be everything you would wish.'

So saying, and without giving her time to utter a single syllable in reply, the gay lover darted from the room, bounded down stairs, and danced out of the house.

'Mad, absolutely mad!' muttered Mrs. Hartley as she returned to the room where she had left the three girls. 'My dear Constance, the plot thickens upon us. You have just confided to me the proposals of a lover whom you have accepted, and I am now come from witnessing the triumphant happiness of another who most pertinaciously persists in declaring that he has not been refused. William Weston assures me, my dear, that he is the happiest man in the world, adding for my particular satisfaction, that he will make you the happiest woman in it. What in the world are we to do with him?'

'Oh! do not let us talk any more about him, dear Mrs. Hartley,' replied Constance, with some little appearance of impatience. 'I must write to grandmamma by to-night's post; and I may tell her, may I not, all you have so kindly said about Mr. Mortimer?'

'Certainly, my dear, certainly. Only, of course, you will take care to add that I am by no means unaware of its not being, in a pecuniary point of view, so good a marriage as she has a right to expect for you. Do not fail to tell her this, my dear Miss Ridley. I owe it to myself, as you must be aware, to take care that no one shall have any right to tax me with imprudence.'

'Your very cordial approval of Mr. Mortimer in all other respects will perfectly content grandmamma,' replied Constance. 'She has often expressed to me the satisfaction she enjoys from feeling that my own independence in that respect was sufficient to save me from the risk of making the fortune of any one man who proposed for me, a reason for accepting him.'

Mrs. Hartley turned her eye another way as Constance said this, and then changed the conversation by remarking that she could not help feeling some little uneasiness about Mr. William Weston, and the open and visible signs which his inward satisfaction might possibly produce.

'When he claimed an *entrée* here on the plea of old acquaintance, he gave me no time to answer him,' she said; 'and if he had, I really know not how I could have mustered the unneighbourly courage to refuse it. But upon my word, my dear, he is so fantastical, that I expect to see him make his appearance, like Malvolio, cross-gartered, and smiling upon you with all the ineffable complacency of assured success. What shall we do with him?'

'Just do nothing with him, Mrs. Hartley,' replied Constance. 'If his wits be wandering, they will be sure to come back to him anon, and he will go on again as well as ever.'

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The ladies then separated, Constance taking refuge in her own room, where, before she set about the agitating task of writing to her grandmother of the great change which had befallen her, she indulged in the greatly-longed-for luxury of a little solitary musing concerning it, first locking the door, and then throwing herself upon the sofa which stood at the bottom of her bed, while with closed eyes and motionless limbs she lay meditating on all that passed, and all that was to follow it.

Mrs. Hartley meantime, accompanied by Margaretta and Caroline, having hastened their luncheon and their second morning toilet, set forth again to enjoy the high-flavoured gratification of spreading far and wide, news to which all would be eager to listen.

To Mrs. Hartley herself this occupation was very peculiarly delightful. It in a great degree identified with her own family an individual whose consequence in society was sufficient to give her precisely the position she desired to hold. Never, perhaps, at any period of her life had the future smiled upon her so brightly. Herself and her own income indissolubly united to a husband, having another income more than double—her favourite daughter wedded to both title and wealth, and the celebrated and arch-fashionable Henry Mortimer thereby connected with them all in close kindred, formed altogether so bright a picture of domestic felicity, that her heart swelled with delightful emotion; and graceful and playful was the action with which she disentangled the chenille fringe upon the mantelet, as it mixed itself with the pendant hearts on her bracelet, while she reseated herself in her carriage; and joyous was the accent in which she said, 'Upon my word, Margaretta, this seems likely to be an important season to some of us.'

CHAPTER XXII.

A PEACE-MAKER—MORE LOVE-MAKING.

The proposal of Mr. Mortimer appeared to have touched a spring which gave movement to many others; for every circumstance and every person with whom Constance had anything to do, appeared either directly or indirectly to be influenced by it, or at any rate it certainly happened, whether in consequence of this event or not, that the various upper and under plots of the little drama, in which she made one, seemed to have received a jog that carried them suddenly forward.

The first symptom of this became perceptible on the night of Lady Stephens' literary soirée. Sir James Ridley, who, from the moment he had heard this 'intellectual reunion' mentioned, had

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stoutly declared that 'wild horses would founder and break down if they attempted to draw him thither,' was not rendered less inveterate in his dislike of 'the sort of thing' by the information officially communicated to him by Mrs. Hartley concerning his sister's marriage.

At first, hearing that Mr. Mortimer had offered, and been accepted without an intervention of his, he was furious, and it required the very utmost efforts of Mrs. Hartley's skill in soothing, to bring him into a manageable mood. Nor was this done at last without her pronouncing a heavier philippic against the presumptuous Constance, than she would have liked her dear Miss Ridley to overhear; but this answered after everything else had failed, so her conscience fully acquitted her.

'What right have you, my dearest Sir James,' she said—'what right have you to expect a miracle from the hand of nature, in order to satisfy the brotherly tenderness of your noble heart?'

'I want a miracle, Mrs. Hartley!' he replied; 'I want nothing from this abominably conceited girl but a little decent reverence to the will and wishes of a brother, who has in every way so good a right to it.'

'That is to say,' replied Mrs. Hartley gently, 'that all you wish to find in her is the same beautiful perfection of character that it has pleased heaven to bestow upon yourself. Sir James! I tell you again, this is asking for a coincidence so rare, and so little likely to occur, as to approach very nearly to a miracle. I have not lived with my eyes shut, Sir James Ridley, but till I knew you, I never met an instance of such lively imagination and brilliant faculties, as I find in you, joined to that perfection of judgment which enables you to decide at a glance upon what it is right to do under every possible circumstance. To expect the same in your sister is unreasonable,—it is indeed, Sir James, and when you have lived in the world as long as I have done, you will find yourself obliged to confess it.'

'Then at least, Mrs. Hartley, I have the comfort of knowing that you do not approve this most insolent conduct in Constance?' said the baronet.

'Approve it? *I* approve a girl's deciding upon such a subject as this without consulting such a brother as you have been, Sir James? Good heaven! Is it possible that for a single instant you could have suspected this? I consider her conduct in this matter, (but remember, dearest Sir James, I say this under seal of the strictest confidence,) I consider her conduct as detestably ungrateful, and disgustingly presumptuous; and all I have to say in her defence is, that you have no right to expect that because you are yourself faultless, your sister should be so too.'

'There is a great deal of truth in what you say, certainly, my dear Mrs. Hartley, and you are the best friend she has in the world, I can tell her that; for if there is anything under heaven that could lead me to forgive her, it would be listening to the reasonable manner in which you put the case. But you will allow, I am sure, that it was enough to put a man in a passion.'

'Enough! Good Heaven, yes, enough indeed! and if you really do overcome the anger and indignation which it is impossible not to feel on the occasion, I shall positively be ready to think you as perfect a being in temper as in intellect: and though my experience does not teach me to expect that any two persons in the same family—except, indeed, it should be parent and child—should possess an equal elevation of character, my theory leads me to believe, that perfect gentleness and forgiving mercy are always likely to be the concomitants of great ability and consummate judgment.'

'I believe you are right, my dear Mrs. Hartley,' replied Sir James, while every feature assumed a sort of wooden benignity that promised well for the future peace of all belonging to him. 'I do not myself believe that very clever people do suffer themselves to care very much about anything that does not absolutely and positively interfere with their own comfort and advantage—only, you know, when one does happen to be aware that one is the best judge about everything, it is trying to see a fool of a girl like Constance insist upon acting for herself, and that in such an affair as marriage too, without stopping for a single moment to inquire whether I thought it right or wrong—such a thing as that does certainly try one's temper.'

'Try!—it may, indeed, try, and *only* try, *your* temper, Sir James, but trust me it would destroy for ever all that was gentle and kind in the heart of most men. But you are—well! it is no use talking about it. It is our duty, you know, as Christians, to take things as we find them, and be thankful they are no worse; but, to be sure, it is rather provoking that your own sister should be the only person in the world who seems perfectly unconscious of the inestimable value of an opinion from such a man as yourself. There is my poor Margaret, for instance—what a singular contrast to be sure! She has just received an offer—an excellent offer, certainly, in the eye of the world—from Lord—but no, I will not name him, for I have promised not to do it; there is nothing boasting or ungenerous, however, in saying that he would be a very great match for her. But you will smile when I tell you, that the first words she uttered on receiving his letter were, "I wonder if Sir James Ridley would advise me to accept him?"'

'Did she indeed? Well, to be sure, as you say, it *is* very remarkable, when one thinks of it just by way of a contrast to Constance. Your daughter Margaretta is a very charming girl, Mrs. Hartley, and let who will offer to her, it can do him nothing but honour. Any man may be proud of making such a choice as Miss Margaretta Hartley. She has good sense and judgment greatly beyond her years; I have observed it, I can assure you, on many occasions and you know, I believe, that as far as finding out character and cleverness goes, I may be trusted pretty safely.'

'You may indeed!' was the reply, uttered with a degree of solemnity which might have enabled Sir James to say of it, 'qu'il dit plus de choses qu'il n'est gros;' and if he did not say this, being in fact no great reader of Molière, he felt it, and felt at the same time that of all the various pleasures afforded us by society, there was none comparable to that of falling into fa-

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miliar intercourse with persons of first-rate ability.

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The party at Lady Stephens' happened on the evening of the day, on which this conversation took place; but notwithstanding the amiable frame of mind in which it left Sir James Ridley, he still persevered in his declaration, that nothing on earth should induce him to join it. His final resolution on the subject was announced at the dinner-table, at which he and his friend Marsh were seated, as they generally were about five days in the week, and Margaretta, on hearing it, replied,

'I think you are perfectly right, Sir James; I am positive it will be a most horrid bore; and as I really and truly, and beyond all joke and jesting, do not feel particularly well to-day, I shall beg mamma to excuse my attendance. The party from hence will be quite sufficiently numerous, without my increasing it.'

Sir James was engaged in preparing an orange for the young lady when this was said, and he continued the operation without returning any answer; but it came into his head that if he could find time, after looking in at his club, he would just step in again at Bruton Street, to find out, if he could, who it was who had proposed to her.

The rest of the party set off at the usual hour to take their places in the '*court of Apollo*,' as one of Lady Stephens' *most* particular favourites termed her *soirées*, and about half-an-hour afterwards a quiet and unalarming knock was heard at the door, and in the next moment Sir James Ridley entered the drawing-room.

Though the discreet and perfectly well-conducted Miss Margaretta Hartley was certainly not in love with this gentleman, her heart, nevertheless, gave a bound as she beheld him, and there was exactly as much confusion in her countenance and manner, as there ought to have been under the circumstances.

'Do I disturb you, Miss Margaret?' said the baronet, as soon as the door had been closed upon him. 'Because, if I do, I won't sit down. Upon my life and soul, there is nothing I hate so much as boring people—there is not, upon my soul.'

'Sit down, Sir James,' replied Margaretta, with the very slightest little sigh in the world. 'I do not think you need be afraid of it here.'

'It is very obliging of you to say so,' he returned, 'and the more so, because I believe what you say is neither more nor less than true; and I am sure I can say in return, that there is no house, let it be where it will, where I feel myself so perfectly comfortable as here. I will tell you what it is, Miss Margaret, and you may take my word for it you will always find it so; I know you have no bad opinion of my judgment, and therefore you will remember what I say, and that is just this,—that when people find one another out to be mutually clever and mutually suitable to one another in conversation, and all that is intellectual and mental, you know they do and always will find pleasure more than mere common visiting pleasure, you know, in being together. Now do you keep that in your head, Miss Margaret, as a sort of keepsake from me, and you'll see if it does not turn out that I am right.'

Margaretta gazed upon him, as he spoke, with the most fixed attention, and when he had finished, replied with the air of a person upon whom some striking but hitherto unknown truth had fallen,

'I do believe it! Sir James, you are right. I feel that you are right, and I do not much think I shall ever forget it. No, there is no danger of that.'

'I am sure it is always a pleasure to lay down any observation to you—you are so quick at understanding one,' he replied: and then added, changing his position from the chair he sat upon to a place beside her on the sofa—'And do you know, I want to say a word or two to you about something your mamma confided to me this morning. Can you guess what I mean?'

Now the truth was, that Miss Margaret not only did not guess what he meant, but that it was morally impossible she should do so, inasmuch as the confidential communication respecting the offer of marriage was one of those impromptu hits upon which Mrs. Hartley so justly piqued herself; but not having had time or opportunity to mention it to her daughter, that young lady was completely thrown out. Fortunately, however, her imagination presently suggested an interpretation which served admirably well, not only to push forward the conversation in the direction she wished it to take, but also to prevent any appearance of incongruity between herself and her mamma. In short, Margaret most fully believed that her mother had thought it advisable to confide to the amiable baronet a few hints concerning the passion he had himself inspired in her tender heart, and thereupon, with all the natural delicacy of her character, she fell into such a series of blushes and agitations as considerably puzzled her companion at first, but which happily ended by touching his heart in the most desirable manner possible.

To a man of Sir James Ridley's temperament, there is no charm, either in earth or heaven, so potent as the simple process of persuading them that they are irresistibly enchanting, and that what would be denied to all other mortals must, despite every effort to the contrary, be yielded of necessity to them. It is true, that this process was not now put in action for the first time upon the nerves of the baronet, by the steadfastly-purposed and patient Margaretta; but it so happened, at the present moment, that time and place cohered to render him peculiarly susceptible; and accordingly, after enjoying for a long while the pleasure of fancying that the young lady was sinking into the earth with confusion, and that his eyes produced on her an effect that made him feel himself gifted with an almost godlike power of annihilation, he condescended to say,

'Come, come, Miss Margaret! you need not be so afraid to look at me. It is a fact, to be sure, that I am no great admirer of young ladies in general, because, upon my word, I believe, for the most part of their time, they are thinking a devilish deal more about themselves than about anybody else,—I do, upon my life and

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soul. But I never did think that was exactly your case, ever since we became acquainted. In point of fact, I have great reason to know the contrary, and I should despise the man, let him be who he would, who would obstinately stick at all times and seasons to one opinion, when there was good and sufficient cause for him to alter it. And that is the reason, Miss Margaret, why I think a great deal better of you than of any girl I was ever acquainted with yet—a devilish deal better, I promise you—I do upon my life and soul.'

As Sir James paused here, and in fact stopped short, in perfect silence, Margaretta thought it advisable to look at him, and it was such a look as really seemed calculated to melt a marble man. It was made up of admiration, reverence, passionate love, and such a degree of confusion, as almost seemed to threaten the reason of the poor confused one.

This admirable look produced the desired effect, and Sir James went on.

'And now that I have fairly told you what sort of an opinion I have formed of you,' said he, 'I don't see why you should not tell me, just as plainly, what sort of an opinion you have formed of me. I like to hear you talk about me—I do, upon my soul; and I need not be ashamed to say so, because the reason of it is neither more nor less than the love of truth; for, without meaning to flatter you the least bit in the world, I can say this, that nobody I have ever known, except perhaps that excellent person your mother, can be compared to you in the matter of finding out what I really am. It is true, upon my life and soul, so you need not scruple to return my compliment in kind, and tell me, just from the bottom of your heart, what you think of me.'

For a moment, something like a weary, languid distaste of the task before her threatened to take possession of Margaretta's nerves, and she very nearly yawned, instead of prefacing her reply by a sigh. But a speedy recollection of the importance of the prize before her came to her assistance; all her strength and apparent animation was renewed, an expression of the most effective kind returned to her eyes, her voice faltered quite as it ought to do, and, in a word, she did honour to her mother and herself, by the manner in which she replied to him.

'O, Sir James!' she began, first looking speakingly at, and then, if possible, more speakingly from him,—'O, Sir James! if truth, and if a true knowledge of your character, were all that was necessary for doing what you ask, it would be easy indeed—thoughts, and words too, would come faster than I could find breath to utter them, and—and—you might perhaps know, at last, how you are estimated by one who—I mean by a real friend. But it is impossible! Alas! I cannot, dare not, say all that I think of you!'

'Well, I declare now that, for the life and soul of me, I can't see the reason why. I am sure I have said enough, Miss Margaret, to prevent your feeling yourself shy with me, and therefore I can't understand what should stop you now, when I frankly desire you to speak out.'

Again Margaretta fixed her very tolerably expressive eyes upon him, and replied, 'O, you would be angry with me—I know you would. You could not bear it. You would say I flattered, or that—O, I know you would be angry with me!'

'Upon my life and soul, my dear girl, you are altogether mistaken. I have long ago made up my mind to think that it is a great weakness to feel shy and put out upon hearing oneself praised, and I don't mind it now—that is, in the way of being confused by it—the least bit in the world; so if that is all, my dear Margaret, you might speak out all that your poor little heart has got in it. There are some men, I believe, who blunder in such matters a good deal, but I can't say that I think I am one of them. I saw, from the very first day that we all became intimate together, that you and your excellent mother formed a very proper idea of what my situation in the world really was, and that neither of you ever conceived the silly thought of attacking such a character as I am with any man-trap thoughts in your heads. Silly women would have fancied that there might be hope in such a scheme; but you and your mother are no fools, Margaret. You saw at once what sort of a man I was, and I do really believe you would as soon have thought of setting your cap at the emperor of China as at me. But that's no reason, my poor dear girl, that you should be blind, or deaf either, for that matter, and upon my soul I don't think the least bit the worse of you, seeing at last that, despite of all your prudence, poor little soul, you have not quite been able to help loving me. You have no right to blame yourself, my dear girl. The circumstance of my being thrown so much in your way, by my sister's being here, is quite a sufficient excuse for it, so don't let my having found it out vex you—nor don't believe me such a hard-hearted fellow, nor such a fool either, as not to see the difference between such love as yours, which you could not help, with all the pains you took to do it, and that of the fortune-hunting misses whose ways are so different.'

By this time the arm of the well-judging baronet encircled the waist of Miss Margaret; and as he now again came to a full stop, which seemed to indicate that he expected a reply, it struck the young lady that the shortest and best answer might be given in pantomime, so she permitted her head to drop upon his shoulder, and, to all appearance, burst into a violent flood of tears.

When a love affair gets to this point, matters usually progress rapidly to the climax at which vows are exchanged, and the parties become bound to each other for life; so that it was, comparatively speaking, but a very few moments after Margaretta had begun to weep upon Sir James Ridley's shoulder, before she exclaimed, with the most touching appearance of satisfaction,

'Is it possible? Am I, indeed, the affianced wife of Ridley?—of the only man my heart ever acknowledged as capable of inspiring love?'

These impassioned words, though uttered with every accompaniment of look and action that could increase their effect, were, neverthe-

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less, not solely the result of love that now, for the first time, ventured to cloth itself in words —they were uttered *avec intention* in the French sense, and in the English sense too. In short, Margaretta now thought it advisable to ascertain to a positive certainty, before the interview ended, that Sir James Ridley considered himself as engaged to her, and might, being interpreted, have been rendered thus:—

'Now, sir, remember you are neither more nor less than my affianced husband, and I am your affianced wife—we must have no vacillating after-thoughts in this business.' And it might have ended with the favourite phrase of her mother, 'Do I make myself understood?'

The reply was favourable though tacit. Sir James kissed the young lady, which, as there was no pen and ink close at hand upon which she could have playfully scribbled a promise of marriage for him to sign, she was fain to accept as a seal, testifying that the affair was happily accomplished.

But, in fact, Margaretta had no reason to fear any retrograde movement after the moment in which Sir James had been so obliging as to declare that it was his intention to make her his wife. From that moment he considered her as his own property, which was a surer way of her becoming precious in his eyes than any other. All that belonged to himself, from his own eyes and his own nose down to his own cat and his own dog, had, in his estimation, a species of value that might almost be called sacred. Caprice could not affect it, inconstancy was powerless to weaken it; it had the united strength of a principle and a sentiment joined; and nothing but a doubt of her being, in spirit and in truth, one of his belongings, was in the least degree likely to shake his fidelity—a risk which Miss Margaretta, on her part, was not the least likely to run.

CHAPTER XXIII.

CONSTANCE RECEIVES HONOUR DUE—A SHORT REPRIEVE—'WHAT SHALL WE SAY WHEN DOCTORS DISAGREE.'

While this very interesting scene was passing in Bruton Street, Mrs. Hartley, her eldest and her youngest daughters, together with Constance Ridley, were amusing themselves as well as they might in the drawing-rooms of Lady Stephens. There were many assembled there whose names, a wondrously short time before, would have made the heart of Constance swell with pride and pleasure, had she been told that she should meet them. But now she felt as if there would be treason and falsehood in remembering that there was more than one living poet in the world; and if, when in the midst of Lady Stephens' circle, she looked out upon the stars which composed it, she did so rather in compliance with the wishes of Mr. Mortimer than her own.

Not only, indeed, did Mortimer wish her to contemplate and remark the various peculiarities which distinguished his accomplished friends and companions, but he wished also that she should be contemplated and remarked by them; and as he well knew that the most effectual way of making this certain was to render her conspicuous as the elected lady of his love, and (which was, in fact, the same thing,) the 'queen of beauty' throughout the empire of May Fair and its dependencies for the time being, he took excellent good care to make her election known.

This was, in truth, a degree of notoriety by no means agreeable to Constance; but she no longer felt herself at liberty to complain of it, even to her own heart. Mr. Mortimer had put it out of her power to doubt the sincerity of his love, and she felt too greatly honoured by possessing it to feel at liberty to complain of his displaying its existence to all the world. Nevertheless, she would have been much more at her ease, and, it may fairly be said, more happy, had his manner of proclaiming the preference with which he honoured her been marked with less ostentatious publicity. Again, again, and again, he brought up poets, dramatists, novelists and statesmen, and presented them with an air which said, as plainly as any words could have done, 'I bring you to look at my affianced wife! Receive them, Constance, as it becomes you to receive my friends.'

This style of doing her honour was the more disagreeable, because, while placing her in the midst, and making her, as it were, the very centre of a circle, to revolve round the extremest verge of which had long been her greatest ambition, it wholly prevented her from enjoying the contemplation of any of the wonders within it. No choice, however, was left her but to yield herself, as gently and gracefully as she could, to the wishes and the will of her future lord; and she went on blushing, and smiling, and looking beautiful enough to elicit some dozen allusions to what

'Youthful poets fancy when they love,'

as long as his sayings and doings rendered it necessary.

But most thankful was she when, at length, the ceremony of introduction appeared to be over—so thankful, indeed, that though the relief was obtained only by the absence from her side of the admired Mortimer, she absolutely seemed to forget his having left her, while breathing freely during her release from eloquently-turned speeches, and the necessity of replying to them.

It was necessary to understand the character of Constance Ridley, and all its peculiarities, as well as Miss Hartley did, in order to understand the feeling expressed by the accent in which she said, 'Dearest Penelope! let us get into that corner, and sit down! I should so enjoy being quiet a little!'

There was much kindness, and some generosity, in the silent obedience with which this request was replied to. Penelope *might* have asked her how she could fancy it possible to enjoy anything while her lover was transferring his adoration—not to another beauty—there really seemed at present to be no danger of that—but

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to a nobleman, high in power and place, who had given him an inviting nod, and at whose side he had strolled out of her sight, and out of the room. Penelope felt that her friend had been 'blasted by excess of light' from the stars and arch-stars brought to blaze, shine, and twinkle upon her; and though wondering a little, perhaps, that love had not sufficient power to make her insensible, or at least indifferent, to everything else, she led her quietly to the retreat she had pointed out, and permitted her to enjoy it, without teasing her by a single observation.

But Miss Hartley was not the only person who had watched the entrance of Constance into the drawing-room of Lady Stephens as the bride elect of Mr. Mortimer. The news of his having proposed and having been accepted, had reached Mr. Fitzosborne, who, considering that he himself certainly admired Constance more than any woman he had ever seen, bore it with great philosophy, and saw the happy lover fly to her as she entered the room, and proudly offer his arm to lead her through it, with a degree of stoicism that did him honour.

That she did not as yet become quite an object of indifference to him was proved by the attention with which he had watched her progress through the rooms, and all the honours that had met and followed her in the course of it. But this attention was so quietly and unobtrusively bestowed, that not even the most curious eye had remarked it; and it was only after the two friends had succeeded in establishing themselves on a sofa in the quietest part of the quietest room, that he made them aware of his presence by taking a chair beside them.

There was something in the manner of Mr. Fitzosborne, when addressing Constance, so completely the reverse of ostentatious admiration, that even at that moment, when she wished for nothing so much as to be out of the way of eyes and speeches, she felt glad to see him, and more speedily recovered the power of enjoying the scene around her, and of forgetting the painfully conspicuous part she had just played in it, than she would have done without him. He saw all this, and understood it too, a great deal better than she did herself; and by leading both her and Penelope to converse on subjects that had no connection either with love, marriage, or Henry Mortimer, he soon calmed the fluttered looks of poor Constance, and made her feel herself again at ease.

Having succeeded in this, and finding that Mortimer, who, for the moment at least, seemed to have drank his fill of the delicious cup of mingled love and vanity, did not return, he ventured to propose that he should conduct them to a small inner room, in which a very precious group of Lady Stephens' lions were showing themselves off to each other, by reading a little, and talking a great deal, about more things in heaven and earth than were ever dreamed of in any philosophy.

Both the young ladies seemed to enjoy the proposal exceedingly, and Penelope, after performing the ceremony of looking about a little, to discover 'where mamma could have hid herself,' ventured to accept the arm offered by Mr. Fitzosborne, and thus protected, to lead the way to the interesting retreat he had mentioned. That it *was* interesting was proved by the fact, that before Constance had been a quarter of an hour amidst the illustrious group, she had absolutely forgotten she was an engaged woman, and only remembered that the *dramatis personæ* who were performing so amusing a farce before her eyes were represented by individuals whose names, or at least some of them, had been long known to her, and that the scene was London.

Fitzosborne marshalled his two fair charges to a very advantageous position, which suited them better than it would perhaps have done any other persons present, for it was a corner whence they could see and hear much more advantageously than they could be seen or heard.

The first few moments were occupied by questions as to who was who, on the part of the ladies, and answers which showed a very perfect *connaissance de personnes* on that of the gentleman; and then they fell into silence, which was absolutely necessary to enable them to snatch intelligibly some fragments of the wit and wisdom that were floating round them like the contesting flashes in a snow-storm; while each, by a sort of tacit agreement, that seemed to foretell a profitable comparing of notes afterwards, addressed an ear to a different speaker. The honoured name of the female Howard of our day, had just been brought upon the tapis, and as Penelope listened to the right of their retreat, she heard an eulogium pronounced upon her that not only placed her in the very highest rank of martyrs, but scrupled not to predict the speedy restoration of the lowest fallen of the species to a state of purity only second to that preceding the fall, as the sure and certain consequence of her labours.

Constance, meanwhile, turned her ear towards the left, and heard a gentleman, who, by the sotto voice in which he spoke, seemed aware of the opposition orator on the other side, thus reason contrariwise:—

'It strikes me,' said he, taking a prodigiously long pinch of snuff, 'that this Howard lady is in benevolence what Miss Linwood is in the fine arts—she seeks to perform, by means totally unfitted to the purpose, a beautiful work, which would infallibly be brought to greater perfection if left to the hands and the tools best fitted for it. When a delicate and fragile gentlewoman sets about a word of charity by bringing herself into close contact with rogues and vagabonds, depend upon it she blunders egregiously. It is not her vocation. If the same funds which her influence now enables her to command were employed to engage zealous but unbeneficed clergymen in the task, the work would not only proceed more steadily, but with infinitely greater propriety;—if I mistake not there would be found about as broad an interval between the utility of the appointed minister and that of the errant lady, as between Miss Linwood and Vandyke. For my own part, I never feel disposed to admire any operation merely because the implements used are unsuitable to it.'

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Then came a discussion on poetry, on which theme, as there did not at the moment happen to be anything personal in the manner in which

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it was handled, many spoke together and all aloud.

'The art,' exclaimed a slight pale man, with red favourites, and a *shy* beginning of an imperial tuft upon his chin of the same hue, 'the art is better understood among us now than it has ever been since the days of Pindar. Poetry, by its very nature, consists of glowing, dreamy, startling, rainbow-tinted thoughts, chasing each other like the flashes that illumine the voluptuous atmosphere of a tropical night.'

'I am sorry to differ from you, Mr. Jumbleton,' replied an elderly gentleman of a different physiognomy, 'but it strikes me that poetry is the very reverse of all this, and can only be produced by the deep and firmly-stamped impressions of a vigorous fancy on a philosophic mind.'

More than one young gentleman with the drapery of their throats *disciolto*, and thin locks in the fretful porcupine style, looked at the old gentleman with contempt; while three middle-aged ladies raised their near-sighted glasses at him at the same moment, and were then unanimously seized with a little shivering fit, that seemed to reach from head to foot.

One very gentle-looking creature, however, raised only the deep lashes of a pair of magnificent eyes, and ventured to murmur, in reply to the sober-minded old gentleman, 'Indeed I think so!' But she was speedily punished for her temerity; for the most decided-looking of the above-mentioned three ladies turned fiercely towards her, exclaiming, 'I am quite willing to dispute the point with you, Mrs. Monkton, and I promise you that I shall show no white feather in the combat.'

'O no! I cannot dispute about it,' returned her gentler adversary, actually becoming pale; 'and your triumph, Lady Burton, would not be worth having, for I am afraid I am white feathers all over.'

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'Never,' said an authoritative voice at the farther side of a table covered with new publications—'never did the drama stand so high as at present. In all else, the immense impulse of newly-awakened intelligence is carrying us forward into new worlds, and new states of existence, even while we still remain on this globe of earth; but in the drama, the only point where we could retrograde with advantage, we are getting back to Shakspeare as to our authors, and to Garrick as to our actors. It is a glorious age in which we live, and might well be called the age of diamonds, so brightly do the gems of genius show themselves among us.'

A deep groan from an individual seated at the same table appeared intended as a reply to this enthusiastic burst, and it was presently followed by the words, 'God bless my soul, sir! I beg your pardon a hundred thousand times, but I really did not conceive that we were fortunate enough to have any drama left!"

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The trio amused themselves not a little in their retreat by listening to these and several other varieties of 'blue' opinions, equally contradictory, and equally positive. But this quiet interval did not last long; for Mr. Mortimer entered the room, evidently in search of the fair creature he had so recently appropriated to himself, and purposing to re-claim her attendance upon him, which purpose he demonstrated by approaching her with a projecting elbow, that plainly said, 'Now take my arm again.'

Penelope watched his manner with a meditative look that was more grave than gay.

Constance herself blushed, and smiled, and blushed again, as she rose and accepted the offered arm; but there was more of mortification than of pride, and more of pain than of pleasure, in the thought that she was going to be again promenaded through the rooms, as a personage upon whom all the world were invited to gaze.

Mr. Fitzosborne looked on and thought;—but it matters not what Mr. Fitzosborne thought, for he communicated his speculations to no one, nor did they in any way appear to influence the even tenour of his way.

THE PRINCESS PARAZADE.

A SKETCH FROM THE ARABIAN NIGHTS ENTERTAINMENTS.

BY MRS. ABDY.

'Princess, a spell from the fairies ask,
Else canst thou never achieve thy task;—
Thou must climb this rugged and steepy track,
Though unnumbered voices may call thee back;
Thou must not pause, by their threats deterred,
Nor must thou utter one angry word;—
Princess, the trial at once resign,
Woman had never a lot like thine!'

Fair Parazade looked up and smiled—
Hers was the spirit resolved though mild,
That little values the world's applause,
Nor fears its ire in a righteous cause;—
Her ear was by threatening clamours rent,
But she recked them not—on her way she went,
Nor glanced she back till the goal was gained,
And the magic treasures were all attained.

Reader, my record forbear to slight,
Nor deem my heroine's labour light;
Is it not trying to wend along
'Mid the scornful taunts of a gathered throng;
Injurious jest and reproach to hear,
Yet meekly hear the insulting sneer;
Our eyes and thoughts on our goal inclined,
Nor ever cast on the scene behind?

'Tis true that in safety we may tread
Our chosen pathway, unharmed by dread
Lest the tyrant arm of lawless force
Snould turn us back from our steady course;
But the bitter strife of evil words
Is often keener than pointed swords;
We answer in wrath, and we yield in fear,
And cease in our course to persevere.

Yet words of menace, of scorn, and ill,
Happily boast not the power to kill;—

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Let conscience bid us, through toil rejoice,
Cheering us on 'with her still small voice;'
Then the world's harsh taunts may echo round,
We shall not shrink from the mocking sound,
But our hopes shall shine, and our strength increase.
As we journey on in our road of peace.

MEMOIRS OF AN ITALIAN EXILE.

BY ELI BLACKGOWN, D.D.

CHAPTER XV.

Catching a Bishop.

"Veggio in anagnia entrar lo Fiordaliso
E nel Vicario suo Cristo esser catto."

Few are the men, owing to the multifarious imperfections of our nature, who can venture to look back on the past with a firm conviction of having always strictly and stoutly adhered to principle. Many are the deeds, of which, however active and successful he may be at the time of their perpetration, in working himself up to the persuasion of their plausibility and equity, the recollection is not, even to a man of irreprehensible character, wholly unaccompanied by some indefinable twinge of remorse. What seems fair, proper, and natural in the first ebullition of passion, is apt to appear less correct and honest after cool and mature consideration; the speciousness of palliative arguments vanishes in proportion as we contemplate our own actions at a greater distance, in proportion as illusion fades and leaves us alone with our sleepless, ruthless, inexorable, inward monitor. Even then, perhaps, we may lull ourselves to rest by dwelling with fond sophisms on the attenuating circumstances which determined our course; but a sudden thought, in spite of ourselves, breaks through the cobweb-work of our fine logic, an eager wish that we might live our life over again, and have once more our choice of the matter.

It is with these views that I would recommend to every man who had in his lifetime frequent occurrences of exercising his free will, to come, as I do, to a general confession of his sayings and doings, to a weighing and sifting of all the motives by which his conduct was actuated, to a self-searching examination in which he may be freely allowed the benefit of the pleading of his *self-esteem* and *love of approbation*, provided conscience may be freely suffered to read the act of accusation. It was only for such a laudable object that I ventured to bring my cause before the mighty jury of the readers of the 'Metropolitan,' making myself voluntarily guilty of what would otherwise appear a most unwarrantable presumption.

The arrest of the most Reverend the Bishop of Guastalla is one of the events in my life to which I find it most difficult to reconcile myself. Those of my readers who had the perseverance to go through the last chapter must be aware of the objections which, at the first blush, my natural good sense suggested against that unjust and arbitrary measure. They must equally know by what artificial reasoning I brought myself to consider as a duty my participation in a deed of which I certainly would by no means have taken upon myself the responsibility. I must now candidly avow that I acted under no impulse of absolute necessity; that our provisional government was so very far from having any means of enforcing its mandate, that had I firmly refused to accompany or to head the expedition, the project would most probably have been altogether abandoned; that, in fact, their messenger never dreamed of addressing me in the peremptory terms of official authority, but had recourse to all the insidious arts of friendly insinuation; and that, after having strenuously and victoriously combated his arguments, I had yielded to a moment of puerile vanity, and accepted the commission merely because no one else, I fancied, had sufficient boldness to carry it into execution.

It was, then, the novelty and boldness of the enterprise that made me wink at what there might be in it objectionable and illegal. I did not stop to consider that, however an Austrian by birth, and bred up at the court of Vienna, the inoffensive Bishop of Guastalla had offered no resistance, and showed no symptoms of ill-will against our revolutionary proceedings. I did not recollect my determination to consider as enemies only those that I should meet on the battle-field; that priests, like women, were to be regarded as helpless creatures, whom in the code of ancient chivalry, it was deemed a felonious and cowardly act to lay hands upon. I forgot my favourite maxim, 'Be just, that ye may be free.' I did not reflect on the possible consequences that might result from exposing an innocent person to the resentment of a lawless multitude in the present state of exasperation and resentment; nor did I know how far I could be answerable for his safety when once I delivered him into their power.

It may, perhaps, appear strange that among so many sources of disinclination to this unlawful undertaking, no mention is made of religious repugnance. For it is well known that among Catholics any violence offered against the person of a minister of the sanctuary is looked upon as an awful sacrilege, calling upon the head of the offender the vengeance of Heaven and the excommunication of the church; so that, till very late, even criminal priests were only amenable to their ecclesiastical tribunals, and could not be delivered over to secular authorities without a previous ceremony of desecration. The fact is, however, that such notions of pious forbearance had gradually worn away even during the bigoted era that preceded the French revolution; for among the convulsions of that stormy age so many churches were turned into play-houses or stables, so many convents converted into barracks or granaries, so many monks and nuns let loose upon the wide world, so many priests summarily shot or unceremoniously hanged, that the dogma of priestly inviolability, no less than that of papal infallibility, have lost their hold even on the heart of the stanchest believer.

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But, in my case, who, attached as I was to the faith of my country, still ardently wished and firmly believed it practicable that religion might subsist without the aid of ministers, whose anti-levitical spirit was sorely vexed and sickened before those myriads of idle 'black sheep of the church,' whose blood boiled at sight of a jesuit, whose eyes darted fire and death at every cowled head I met on my path; the arrest of a prelate—could it only have been called forth and authorized by the slightest suspicion of guilt—would have been looked upon not only without any superstitious misgiving, but entered into with the greatest fervour as a most meritorious exploit.

Indeed, my hatred of the church went far, I believe, to induce me to lend my co-operation in that deed of injustice; so that, laying all possible future blame at the door of my committers, I was only alive to the excitement, the bustle, the anxiety, of 'catching a bishop.'

I was then in that heroic mood which tended to magnify my person and actions to the most prodigious dimensions, and the images of monarchs and illustrious personages I had read of in history, as being implicated in violent quarrels with the church, a host of Henrys and Fredericks of Germany, of Philips of France, the ghosts of Arnold of Brescia, Savonarola and Sarpi, rose triumphantly before my silly imagination, and I fancied I was soon going to be ranked among the greatest of them. Above all, my mind loved to conjure up and to dwell on the phantom of Sciarra Colonna, the daring rebel, who, at the head of a few French barons and the partisans of his house, had taken by surprise the false Pope Boniface VIII. in Anagni, and struck him with so much violence, that the pontiff bore on his face the marks of his iron gauntlet to the grave; and I started and fidgeted on my carriage-seat as I began to consider that journey, and the thief-taking business that was at the end of it, as a first signal of a general attack upon our overgrown clergy; and I hailed the dawn of the day when all Italy should rise against its ten thousand monasteries with fire and sword, drive the doting pope and his purple retinue from the Vatican, and accomplish the work which even Napoleon left unachieved.

The times seemed indeed fully ripe for the realization of the happy dream. The pope's subjects were in open insurrection, and were rapidly marching against the vicar of Christ; and though it was loudly declared that they rose against him only as a temporal ruler, still every one was aware that once the throne being upset, the altar itself would stand on a very treacherous basis; that the nation and the church could never come to a reconciliation without a most radical reform of its flagrant abuses; and that, in fact, the whole edifice would of itself crumble to atoms as soon as that time-sanctioned scaffolding, by which tyranny had hitherto contrived to support it against the inroads of freedom of inquiry, were actually removed. As yet, no open declaration of war had taken place—questions of vital importance were to be previously settled. The terrors of an impending Austrian invasion paralyzed the endeavours of our boldest innovators. Not a word was said, not a cry raised, against the church. Our patriots knew how fatal priestly enmity had proved to Napoleon and the Carbonari of 1820. The influence of the clergy had, indeed, of late considerably subsided; the unpopularity of the papal government had reflected a universal disgrace on the whole Catholic hierarchy. Still it was deemed a prudent measure to leave them alone till the national cause had prevailed. In our power they were, and we could always immolate them at full leisure. On their parts, the priests seemed aware of the precariousness of their situation. The Jesuits at Modena and in Romagna never stirred from their convents. A few Franciscans, if they ever ventured out, walked downcast and woe-begone. The most cultivated priests courted popularity by affecting liberal manners and principles. The youngest of them threw off surplice and gown, and boldly abjuring their vows, joined the ranks of our national combatants.

All this, however, would hardly do. We felt that we were on the eve of a tremendous explosion, and the arrest of a bishop might as easily have hastened it as the storming of the castle of St. Angelo.

One circumstance, however, acted in our favour, and bade fair to reconcile that first act of aggression with the maintenance of peace. The bishop was a German. Had he been racked, and burnt, and quartered alive, the most conscientious Catholic in Italy would hardly think it a sacrilege. He was a German, and the very circumstance of his promotion to an Italian see, to the exclusion of the native clergy, called upon his head the resentment which, perhaps not unjustly, rankled in every bosom against the partiality of our un-national government. 'Our priests,' I thought, 'will never stand up in defence of a minion of Maria Louisa. Rather will they thank us for having vacated the seat of the foreign intruder, and made room for their general advancement. "It is an ill wind," they will say with that resignation with which men are wont to accommodate themselves to war, plague, and other calamities, —"it is an ill wind that blows nobody good."'

However these and similar thoughts might then dance before my mind's eye, they certainly did not greatly affect my spirits. All alive to the extraordinariness of my situation, I was rather pleased with the idea of being engaged in an expedition, of which the management was solely trusted to my discretion, and my chief anxiety was in measuring our chances of success. If anything could have power to remove all my anxieties, it was the calm and bold look of determination with which my companions returned my occasional glance. Little was spoken between us during our journey, and of that little scarcely anything concerning its object.

Our tall and lean and lank but high-mettled post-horses meanwhile carried us onward at so speedy a rate as would have left even the highly-boasted English mail-coaches behind. Our magnificent Lombard plain, smooth and level as a billiard-table, spread before us in its monotonous nudity, and, though divested of its green mantle, it scarcely exhibited any object to rivet our attention, yet there was something in

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the majesty of its unbounded ocean-like extent, and in the winter breeze that swept over its faded meadows, highly refreshing and exhilarating. The sun, too, shone in its full pomp; and although the mildness of the weather allowed us in February to ride in open carriages with impunity, still every wood and field, every object in view, was mantled with hoar-frost melting and glittering in the meridian ray.

Presently we arrived in sight of the Modenese confine, and were not a little cheered by the sight of the tricolour standard, which, contrary to the common reports, was still waving from the ramparts of Brescello. The moment our convoy was descried, three horsemen rode full speed towards us.

'Who, and what are you, and where are you bound to?' exclaimed the foremost, reining up his horse, and standing on our path.

'We are national guards from Parma,' answered I, 'and bound to our good town of Guastalla on an official errand.'

'You have our leave to cross the Modenese territory,' replied the stranger; 'only you must suffer us to escort you on your way. My name is Rolandi, gentlemen, acting deputy commander of the national guard at Brescello—these two gentlemen are equally officers of the garrison.'

'Rolandi!' said I, starting from my seat with irresistible surprise. 'What! not the——'

'Ay, the same,' he interrupted, guessing my meaning. 'You have heard my name mentioned before this, I dare say.'

And truly I had. I turned round to look at him with all the intensity of unutterable curiosity, as, having placed themselves on the right and left of our carriage, our escort suffered our caravan to proceed. Truly I had heard of him, and many thousand miles would I have travelled to see that countenance that so unexpectedly offered itself to my inspection. He had hardly reached thirty, but his sunburnt complexion and dappled hair gave him the appearance of a man somewhat beyond the meridian of life. His stature was tall and commanding, and he bore him loftily on his saddle. His eyes were dark and piercing, but their rapid and frequent twinkling scarcely allowed one to get a full insight of them. There was such an eternal restlessness in all his features, such a perpetual convulsion pervaded his limbs, as might easily have betrayed the inward working of an uneasy mind, even to the eye of the dullest observer.

There was a fearful history attached to that man, and I had heard of it in that age of earliest mental development, when such recitals are calculated to leave an indelible impression.

At a nocturnal meeting of the Modenese Carbonari, after the downfall of their revolutionary schemes of 1820-21, a long deliberation was held as to the most expedient means of putting an end to the hostile proceedings of the police, whose indefatigable activity seemed to threaten their society with utter extermination. The president or minister of that all-powerful engine of government was the too famous Tesini, a man who had been numbered among the most conspicuous members of the Carbonari society, but who, by an act of the darkest apostacy, had passed over to the enemy, and was now the right arm of the duke's government, and the soul of his council. The disclosures of this unnatural monster, who was in possession of all the secrets of the revolutionary sect, had spread universal consternation among his former associates. Self-defence, however, inspired them with the courage of despair: they met once more; they constituted themselves into an awful tribunal, rigidly adhering to all the rites and ceremonies of their dark institutions, and after having heard every argument that could be brought forward in exculpation of the ill-fated commissary, sentence of death was unanimously, solemnly pronounced against him. The judgment having emanated from the supreme council of the grand masters, the execution was to be left to one of the youngest members of the community. Lots were drawn, and the choice fell upon Rolando de Rolandi, a young student of medicine, quite recently admitted among the junior members of that formidable brotherhood. Some of his friends remonstrated against the imprudence of charging an inexperienced youth with a mission fraught with such difficulties and dangers; many volunteered to take it upon themselves, but he remained inflexible. He repeated that since Providence had chosen him as an instrument of its eternal designs, it could not fail to support and strengthen him in the hour of trial.

He was then in his nineteenth year. Only two days afterward, a few minutes before the peals of the Ave Maria announced the setting of the sun, quite in the full daylight, in one of the most frequented streets of Modena, Tesini was walking leisurely home from the palace, where he had a long conference with the duke. He walked arm-in-arm with one of his secretaries, all absorbed in deep conversation. The people gave way before him, bowing in silence, and casting their eyes to the ground, then stopping to look after him, muttering a curse between their teeth. He wore on his breast the ribands of the decorations with which his sovereign had rewarded his treason. He was an old man, and had long been seen walking with an unsteady tread, and bent by years and infirmities; but now he strove to raise himself to his full height, and returned the salutations of the crowd with a haughty smile of condescension, as a man who knew he owed the homages to the dread he inspired, and exulted in his hated but redoubted authority. At the turn of a corner a man was seen rushing upon the well-watched pair with the vehemence and rapidity of lightning. The impetus of his onset threw the ill-balanced secretary flat to the ground. With his left the aggressor grasped the throat of the president of the police, whilst with the right he buried a dagger in his bosom. Ere any one so far recovered from surprise as to be aware of what had happened, the assassin had darted through the crowd, and was out of sight.

The minister of the police (I leave surgeons to account for the fact as they can) stepped forward three or four paces, then turned round and stooped to help his companion that lay still stunned and bewildered on the pavement.

'Look,' said he with great coldness, pointing

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to the handle of the murderous weapon that stood stuck up on his breast, close to the knightly riband, but from which not a drop of blood was seen to trickle out. 'Look,' said he, as he handed the hat to his fallen friend, 'look what they have done to me!'

The crowd gathered round: but the commissary continued his walk without leaning on his friend, and refused the assistance of the most officious bystanders.

'Let his highness look well to himself,' said he; 'who ever heard of such an abominable trick? In full daylight too—and, look! in sight of the Holy Virgin of the *Sette Dolori*. Jesus Maria! Doctor Manghi,' he added, turning to a surgeon he met on his progress, 'I am glad to see you. There is a job for you, you see. I wish I could have a quarter of an hour's *tête-à-tête* with his highness.'

Thus he continued talking somewhat incoherently, but always with the greatest volubility, and walked with firm step, till he reached his own door. His friend and the doctor alone followed him up stairs. He threw himself on a sofa completely exhausted. His cheeks were deadly pale, his eyes haggard and wild. Not a drop of blood had issued from the wound, but it was plain that death was busy at his heart.

His dying wish was complied with. No sooner had the reporter of his mishap reached the ducal palace, than Francis IV. threw himself in his carriage, and, escorted by his dragoons, hastened to visit his devoted servitor. Surgeons and priests gave way before their sovereign. He was left alone with the dying man for about half an hour, when he rang the bell and summoned the attendants. Tesini was speechless. The surgeon made an attempt to remove the lethal weapon. The features of his patient were distorted by a ghastly smile, and he expired without a groan.

The conversation between the duke and his minion no one could presume to have overheard; but it was universally surmised that Francis IV. had evinced the deepest sympathy in his friend's misfortune, and vowed he would never rest till he had fitly and adequately avenged him.

Meanwhile the idlers of the 'Caffé delle Belli Arti' were looking from behind the shop-window at the bustling crowd without.

'Something dreadful has happened,' said Liberati, a young lawyer of quiet, indolent habits.

'Ho! one of you goand see what the deuce is the matter there. But, stay; here comes Rolandi.—Well, my boy, what's the news?'

Rolandi came down the street where the tumult seemed to be at its height. 'I do not know—I never stopt to inquire. Some murder, I suppose.'

No one asked any further. The cry of 'murder' is, or rather used to be, too common in Italy to excite any considerable alarm.

'Hanno ammazzato uno!' say the gaping crowd at Florence or in Rome, and the bell is rung, the brothers of the *misericordia* run to the spot, and it is nobody else's business to meddle with it.

'What's the matter with you, Rolandi? you look pale,' inquired his friend.

'Nothing in the world,' replied Rolandi with great firmness. 'That odious crowd! Here, boy, bring me a lemonade! And by-the-bye, Liberati, do you know you owe me a *revanche* at chess? Come, the chess-board awaits us.'

So he said. He sipped his lemonade, played his game, and beat his antagonist.

He was then aged nineteen.

On the morning Professor Pascali was invited to proceed to an official visit of the commissary's corpse, and to make what is there called '*l'autopsia del cadavere*. He was professor of *medicina legale* at the university, and was followed by some of his pupils. Rolandi was among the number.

'Young gentlemen,' said the professor, accurately wiping his spectacles with a cambric handkerchief—Italian doctors are as nice and effeminate in their habits as ancient Sybarites—'young gentlemen, you see there has been a wound inflicted in the thoracic region by a sharp instrument, most likely a dagger or *stiletto*, with one of those triangular blades, a hurt from which is so usually attended with instantaneous death.'

'Ay, ay, so it appears,' said Rolandi, on whom the eye of the good professor happened to rest.

'There has been, as you perceive,' continued the learned doctor, 'hardly any effusion of blood. This is one of those wounds which are said to bleed inwardly; for the dagger having been left in the wound, in consequence also of the exiguity of the blade, the blood, bursting from the broken vessels, found every outlet obstructed, and invaded the cavity of the lungs, producing immediate suffocation.'

'Quite plain,' echoed the pupils.

'Rolandi,' pursued the professor, 'hand me that *specillum*, or rather since you are more at hand, oblige me by sounding the depth of the wound. There, gently, do not force your instrument in, but follow the wound in all its natural meanderings.'

'Five and half inches, sir,' said Rolandi, extracting the long blunted needle, dripping with clotted glore. 'It is evident the assassin took a good aim, and struck to the heart's core.'

We must draw a curtain over the rest of the proceedings of the member of the faculty, and of his hopeful pupils, lest the reader should sicken at it. Suffice it to say, that Rolandi was left alone to perform the last offices—alone in the chamber of death—alone with his victim.

But this young man, who, acting under the influence of a false and guilty principle, but too fatally in consonance with the most generous feelings of patriotic duty, had evinced such a rare firmness and inconceivably cold blood, who had steeled his nerves to such a wonderful ordeal, had received a shock from which he could never, in after life, entirely recover.

Like his victim's wound, the impression he had received worked inwardly. Like the Spartan youth, he hugged his remorse to his bosom. His countenance never, by the slightest twitch, by the faintest flush, betrayed the agony of his soul, but the stifled pang of conscience had fastened its fangs on his heart, and preyed on his vitals. Sleep had deserted his couch. He started up in the dark in anguish and terror. He was heard at dead of night gnashing and

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howling like a maniac. His ravings went so far, that after a long struggle, dreading lest remorse should betray him during his fearful slumbers, two months after the perpetration of the deed, and before the suspicions of the anxious police had in any manner lighted upon him, he asked and obtained his passport, and put the Alps and the sea between him and the scene of his guilt.

May the clemency of an all-righteous God look mercifully on human transgressions! for here we have a premeditated deed of bloodshed, an assassination, committed in open defiance of all divine and human laws, by a youth, than whom there seldom was a more upright and generous character, and in obedience to orders issued by a body of men, to whom a whole town looked up as the best models of irreprehensible citizens.

How far the concurrence of extraordinary circumstances may go to render homicide an excusable, unavoidable, and even meritorious act, Heaven forbid that I should ever take upon myself to affirm. Since the light of the gospel dawned upon the benighted earth, the exploits of Harmodius, Timoleon, Brutus, and other patriotic assassins, as well as suicides of antiquity, have been considered only as delusions of pagan heroism, and looked upon as anything but enviable or imitable examples.

In modern Italy, the Pazzi, the Olgiati, the murderers of Alessandro de Medici, Pier Luigi Farnese, and a hundred others, were either not actuated by the purest motives, or the sanctity of their motives was misconstrued in consequence of their want of success. William Tell is, for aught I remember, the only Christian hero whose premeditated murder received the universal, unqualified absolution of posterity, and the great plea of self-defence is, somewhat gratuitously, urged forward in his exculpation. The same argument operated with equal force in favour of the Vehmic tribunal of the Modenese Carbonari, and of their fearless executioner. A heartless renegade was selling them all to a relentless tyrant. The sword of an arbitrary law hung on their devoted heads. Every night they laid themselves down to rest uncertain of the morrow. Tesini held their fatal secret in his hands—a secret with which nothing but the awful oath which he had most unnaturally violated had possessed him. Could he thus have their fate in his keeping, and live? Was he not aware of the terrible vengeance with which each of his associates had sworn to visit all apostacy? Had he not voluntarily acknowledged the authority of that illegal jurisdiction—entered into that solemn, mutual compact—laid his life down as a pledge of his honour and truth? From the first moment of his cowardly defection, he knew that the dagger stood lifted up against his breast, and that nothing but sheer terror or impotence stayed the avenging stroke.

All these reasonings were insufficient to allay the storms that raged in the startled imagination of the unfortunate Rolandi. How wide and far did he not roam, in his anxiety to fly from himself? what did he leave unachieved that could, in some degree, atone for that rash deed, to the perpetration of which he was led by what he believed to be the most sacred of duties?

In Spain, in Greece, in South America, wherever a revolutionary standard was raised, the noble youth hastened, the sworn champion of liberty. Always in the foremost ranks, in the forlorn hopes of every battle he fought like a man courting death for its own sake. But where he sought danger he only found glory; from the wastes of Columbia to the shores of Morea, his name was repeated with enthusiasm and especially after the battle of Missolonghi, the gratitude of the Greeks knew no limits. They loaded him with honours and dignities, and spared nothing that could bind the Modenese hero to his adopted country.

Meanwhile the murder of Tesini had filled Modena with a joy that no terror could subdue. The duke, faithful to the promise he had made to his dying minister, looked around him for a proper object on whom he might glut his vengeful ire. He singled out two innocent victims, Toccoli and Panzani, whose recent differences with the late police president might, he supposed have tempted them to that act of revenge. The two young men were thrown into prison, from which it was the duke's mind that they should never see the light again. In vain they both succeeded in proving, by an *alibi*, the impossibility of their participation in the deed; in vain did Rolandi, who happened to be in England, when he heard of their arrest, write to the duke, assuring him that he, and he alone, was the author of the crime; in vain were the prisoners declared innocent, even by the mercenary tribunal appointed to decide on their fate. The duke answered, that the written evidence given by Rolandi could be of no avail, and that, in the meanwhile, he should consider his two prisoners as his accomplices, and send them back to jail, at the disposition of the police, until the main culprit should appear to give satisfactory proofs of his assertion.

In this manner did the innocent suffer and languish for more than eight years, till 1831, when Rolandi, on the first report of insurrectional movement, sailing from Navarino to Rimini, and thence to Modena, after the expulsion of the duke, broke open the iron doors of his friends' cells, and restored them to liberty.

But alas! the revolution of 1831 had but an ephemeral success. Scarcely a twelvemonth afterwards, I met these two unfortunate sufferers, then helpless emigrants, in France, Panzani well-nigh deprived of his eye-sight, Toccoli labouring under a periodical mental alienation. Both of them testified to the long infliction of torture, in comparison with which even the melancholy recitals of Pellico and Andryane sink into insignificance. They both firmly believed that slow poisons, especially an infusion of *belladonna*, had been administered to them, with a view to wrench a confession from their impaired faculties and shattered brains. They told that terrific apparitions and appalling monsters had been resorted to, to enfeeble their understanding by constant agitation and sleeplessness. Perhaps these terrors may be partly ascribed to the effect of a diseased imagination; but that one had left the duke's prisons nearly blind, and the

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other more than half insane, could be no matter of doubt.

But if these poor wretches were so far indebted to our movement of 1831, as to exchange the doom of imprisonment for life for what may prove endless exile, their deliverer Rolandi was not equally fortunate. Failing, even by his own strenuous example, to breathe his own bold spirit into the hearts of the timid old men who, at Modena, no less than at Parma, had been placed at the head of public affairs, he was involved in the retreat of the national forces, and, after the combat of Rimini, he embarked with some of the most conspicuous patriots at Ancona, whence, the vessel he sailed in having fallen into the power of Austrian cruizers, he was, with his friends, conveyed to Venice, and there thrown into the prisons of the ancient inquisition of state.

But even in that awful extremity his brave heart did not quail within him. By what means he may have contrived to baffle the hundred-eyed vigilance of his Austrian keepers, by what unprecedented good luck he broke through the all but insurmountable obstacles by which he found himself environed in those *Piombi e Pozzi*, from which no victim was ever before or afterwards known to escape, I never had means to ascertain. So far only I know, that with the aid of a fair, devoted Grecian maiden, who sailed to Venice on hearing the first report of his misfortune, he scaled the walls of his prison with that unmatched agility for which he was renowned, found shelter in the house of the British consul for a few hours, (the French consul had basely shut his door against him,) went through several disguises, so as to elude the search of his pursuers, rowed to the main land in the garb of a gondolier, and travelling across Lombardy on foot, without money or passport, he never stopped till he saw himself in perfect security in the land of the Grisons.

On that very day the commissaries of the Duke of Modena applied for his removal to the dungeons of the House of Este!

Such was the character of the adventurer with whom unexpected circumstances brought me into contact. As we travelled across the five or six miles of Modenese territory that divide the duchy of Parma from the little state of Guastalla, I astonished him with the news of our engagement at Fiorenzola. His eyes flashed with unutterable delight as he pointed to the opposite bank of the mighty river, on whose gigantic dike our main road was built, and blessed his stars that he had come in time, and that he could yet give for his country what was to him a cheerless and wearisome life.

The road ran, as I said, immediately over the bank of the Po, and that glorious stream, swollen by the thawing of snows from the Alps and Appenines, rolled its impetuous flows with such a vehemence, as to shake the lofty ramparts that the industry of men raised against its ravaging fury. The river has there an extraordinary width, and as it winds rather abruptly towards the south, it presents such a broad extent of waters that the view is, as at sea, lost on its boundless surface. The low opposite shore is only seen here and there, at wide intervals, overgrown with long rows of Lombardy poplars, towering over the waves, straight, erect, compact, like a long array of myriads of combatants.

Beyond these waves, beyond that shore, behind those forests, dwelt the northern rulers of Italy. Our old father Po seemed to roar with redoubled strength, as if willing to afford his sons, more amply and safely, the shelter of his broad-eddying waters. As long as that vast stream ran between us and the enemy, we could stand in no dread of sudden assaults. But alas! at Placentia, at Ferrara, at Novi, and elsewhere, the provident Austrian had, by the treaties of 1814, secured in his hold the passes of the river. The cause of our country had no bulwarks but the unarmed breasts of our citizens, and the numberless disciplined hosts of our masters had power to fall upon us suddenly, irresistibly, from every quarter.

On the confine we parted with our escort, and a few miles' ride brought us to the gates of Guastalla. Our third little capital, the ancient seat of one of the younger branches of the Gonzaga of Mantua, was now kept on the war-footing, and its militia was seen beautifully arrayed before the walls, engaged in its warlike exercises. We gained admittance with little difficulty, and, riding to the Town Hall, were ushered in the presence of the municipal magistrates. The *podestà*, or mayor, as stout and portly a personage as mayors and aldermen are wont to be all over the world, received from my hand the official packet, containing, as I thought, the habeas corpus, in virtue of which the person of his eminence the Bishop of Guastalla was to be delivered into our hands, and having opened it, remained staring and gaping in an attitude of utter mystification.

'I hope your worship can read,' said I, with some impatience. 'Those secretaries write such a shocking bad hand,' I added, with a view to soften my insolent remark.

'He must be a cleverer man than I am that reads this,' said his worship, handing the paper over to one of his syndics. The syndic shook his head and passed it to one of his colleagues. After having made the tour of every person in the room, the precious document finally came back to my hands.

The paper was blank!

'It is most probably written with sympathetic ink,' I observed, 'and your worship must have the key to it.'

'I know nothing of inks of that sort,' replied the mayor, 'and am at a loss to guess on what errand you have come.'

I seized his worship by his coat-button, and led him to the embrasure of a large balcony.

'It is a matter that requires some delicacy and discretion, Mr. Mayor,' said I; 'we have come to take your bishop a prisoner with us, and want the countenance and assistance of the municipal authorities.'

'What! what! what! Our bishop a prisoner! Why, had you really brought such an order, the very stones of our pavement would rise in rebellion to thwart your design.'

'Hush, Mr. Mayor, if you please. I tell you we must proceed with caution and speed. An order we brought, I assure you, and it is mos

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unfortunate that we have to deal with a mayor that cannot read.'

'But I tell you ——'

'Nay, you understand me not. I see that you are not aware that our revolutionary officers correspond through the means of chemical preparations, of which they alone, and their trustworthy correspondents, are in the secret, and I am greatly puzzled to explain how it happens that you have not been initiated in their mysteries.'

So I said, and such to a certain extent was the case. Though in that peculiar circumstance I felt assured that no such expedient had been resorted to, and that we were in fact the bearers of nothing but a blank sheet, our government being unwilling to commit to paper an arbitrary order, which, should our revolution fall to the ground, might have risen in judgment against them.

My little stratagem, however, completely succeeded. The worshipful magistrate turned the mysterious paper in every direction, held it against the light, always with the hope of deciphering what there never was written. I availed myself of his perplexity, and continued —'Mr. Mayor, it will be no use to attempt to read what is meant only for an adept in all the arcana of republican bureaucracy; but there is another book on which experience must long since have taught you to read. Look at me, at my countenance! Do you see in it the marks of subterfuge and deceit? Well, then, I tell you, on my honour, we are here in compliance with an order of our provisional government, to effect the arrest of your bishop. We are armed and determined; we will never go back without our prisoner. Now take your choice. Say one word, and your town becomes a scene of strife and bloodshed. Let us alone, and we will do the business without you.'

'But, but, but ——'

'Not a word, Mr. Mayor, not a word! No living man has ever heard our conversation. Trust me for once, you had better forget every word of it.'

As I said this I bowed profoundly, and left the room. I held a brief conversation with my followers on the staircase of the town-hall, and we determined on our best course with sufficient calmness and resolution.

SIMILITUDINES.—No. III.

BY MISS H. B. MACDONALD.

THE NIGHTINGALE AND THE ROSE.

As in the silence of resigned repose,
Some mournful Nightingale is watching by
The last faint breathing of his dying rose,
With something wearing in his hopeless eye
To speak its flight of life, is dimming now,
While others lovelier, around may glow
In vain for him,—is one who watcheth love
Departing,—by its cold and withering look,
And cheerless smile, which late so joyed to rove
'Neath his warm glances, even as it took
Its inspiration there: Alas, alas!
Which it shall seek no more! Think to regain
The odours that with autumn winds did pass,
And sighs for past affection are as vain!

MR. MARRABLE'S MANAGEMENT.

Marrable was once more at his lodgings in Bloomsbury. The room looked very small, and the furniture very shabby, and the condition very dirty, and the air very suffocating, and the house-tops very smoky, and the whole affair very unendurable, after the lofty rooms and their princely garniture, and the gladdening sunshine, and the fresh breeze of Seven Oaks.

'I wish I was there again,' thought Marrable; 'but with all my management I scarcely see how I am to manage that. My purse is empty, and how is that to be replenished? Ay, these ways and means questions are questions of plague enough. If I could only manage to get out of them, and if I could manage to get this Helen Quaife, then adieu to these sad frettings of pounds, shillings, and pence, which are enough to make one's hair grey in a week, and spoil one's good looks for ever. But I won't give up—I have too much spirit for that. I have managed all my life, and I am not going to give up now.'

Whereupon Marrable snatched up his hat and sallied forth, plunging into that stream of human life which is daily ebbing and flowing through the channels of our town.

'Things turn up,' thought Marrable, 'when you are mixed up with other people. What can come to you when you are shut up in a little six-foot-square room, and nobody knowing where you are? Always throw yourself into fortune's way—never keep out of it.'

So Marrable turned into Regent Street.

'Marrable!' said a loud full-toned voice.

Marrable turned his eyes upon a tall, large-boned military-looking man.

'Ah, Captain Ravenall, is it you? and how d'ye do?'

And 'how d'ye do? how d'ye do?' said both the gentlemen together.

Marrable was an adept at small talk; it was a necessary part of his qualification to *manage* everybody. He immediately opened a chapter of nothings. In five minutes he had run over the weather, and the town, and the country, and the opera, and the queen, and the prince, and politics.

Captain Ravenall was evidently rather impatient to get away.

'I have a [illegible] of business to do in town—I came yesterday, and go to-morrow. Off to the East Indies for eight years. Sail the day after to-morrow. Makes me in a great hurry. Know nobody in town. I am sure you will excuse my haste.'

'Anything I can do for you?' said Marrable.

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* Continued from p. 69.

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'Nothing thank you.'

'Here is my card,' said Marrable. 'If anything arise in which I can be of use, command me.'

'Thank you, and good-bye,' said Captain Ravenall with a hasty shake of the hand.

'I might have *managed* something out of him if he would only have given me something to do,' said Marrable to himself.

Marrable wandered about the remainder of that day; but, with all his acute and quickened observation, he could not discover a single opening of opportunity which he could *manage* to make anything of. He took off his pinching boots and put on his easy slippers, but even easy slippers after tight boots cannot administer to a mind diseased. In vain he racked his brain, in vain he ransacked his memory; neither the one nor the other were of the least use to him. His memory was like a book of bad debts, and his head like an empty barrel. He asked himself over and over again if he had a single friend in the world who would lend him five pounds, and as many times as he made the inquiry he got precisely the same answer; so at last he was obliged to go to bed and try if dreams would suggest anything; but as his dreams told him that Quaife Hall was never built for him, and that Helen cared not a straw for him, he got up in the morning declaring that dreams were all rubbish, and that they only adulterated sleep.

Another day Marrable spent as like unto the last as two twin cherries on one stalk. Again he returned to his lodgings, again he moralized on the instability of agreeable things, and the stability of disagreeable ones; again he kicked off his boots, and thought himself the most ill-used of all the children of men; and again he was just on the point of prostrating himself upon his pillow, when his thoughts received a new impulse by the very hasty entrance of Captain Ravenall in a sort of red-hot speed.

'Mr. Marrable,' said the captain, 'excuse my untimely visit. You were kind enough to say you would allow me to make you useful. Were they only words of course, or did you really mean it?'

'Try me,' said Marrable.

'I will. I told you yesterday that I had much business upon my hands; one of its heaviest parts was this: I dare say you are too prudent ever to get into debt, but I have not always been so. I was greatly in want of money sometime back, and I got a little tradesman of mine to cash me a bill; it was not paid, and though only for five hundred pounds, it ruined him. The man was a bankrupt, and I know not what. Two months back I received a letter from him full of the most dolorous tidings; he was starving; he had nine children who were starving to keep him company, and a wife equally complaisant. Well, I have done what I could to get this money together; you will smile that so small a sum should either ruin him, or inconvenience me; but little matters sometimes harass us as much as great ones. Well, I could not leave England with a quiet conscience, and know that this trifling affair was unpaid. I have here the five hundred in my pocket-book.'

'Why did you not apply to me—a word would have been enough—that I might have had the pleasure of assisting you,' said Marrable, with great liberality.

'You are very good—liberal indeed; but I could not have thought of such a thing.'

'O, why not? Trifles between friends. You could have done the same for me another time.'

'You are too prudent ever to fall into such dilemmas. But to go on. It was my business to-day to pay this money. Here is the man's last letter to me, containing his address in a vile out-of-the-way place in the Borough. I have been there, and he had gone to some hole in Gray's Inn Lane. Well, that, after innumerable tracings about and dodgings, I contrived to find, and then, lo and behold! the poor fellow with his nine children have gone to live at Shadwell. Of course it is impossible for me to go to them now. I should never be able to discover them in the middle of the night, and if I did, I could not rouse them out of their bed even to pay them money. I have already lost my place in the coach to Portsmouth, and we sail to-morrow—it is all that I shall be able to do to be there in time. In this dilemma I remembered your offer to help me, and likewise that you were living at a not immeasurable distance from my last post, and I resolved to put your friendship to the test by asking you to undertake this disagreeable journey to Shadwell to find this poor Muggeridge out, and pay him these five hundred pounds.'

'Most willingly,' said Marrable.

'Thank you heartily,' said Captain Ravenall, 'that disagreeable affair will be off my mind. And now I must try to redeem lost time.'

The captain was gone, and Marrable sat with the five hundred pounds spread out before him.

'If they were only mine,' thought Marrable; 'if I could only borrow them, all my difficulties would be over. I could make an *appearance*, and manage to get Helen Quaife in a couple of months' time. Five hundred pounds would enable me to throw dust in the old squire's eyes, make him think I was substantial, and the thing would be done. I could equip myself afresh, buy a cab and a horse, and go down in something like a suitable style for a pretender to little Helen's hand. I wish they were mine. I wish I could borrow them for just two months.'

But as there was nobody there to lend them, Marrable rolled them up, and went once more to the realm of visions, where he dreamt all night of a white and green cab, and a piebald horse, and Helen Quaife, and that he was in fact lord and master of the lady and mistress of Quaife Hall.

He woke, however, to find it but a dream. The white and green cab, and the piebald horse, and Helen Quaife, were nothing but very agreeable spectres, which vanished from the opening eye and the morning light. So Marrable breakfasted and set off for Shadwell.

The road was intricate, and dirty and disagreeable beyond all genteel supposition. The squalid, forlorn, unwashed children swarmed under his feet. There were so many, that Marrable thought it must have rained children, and that they had not yet had time to melt.

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Alas for the loathsome poverty that hides like a stagnant pestilential vapour in the unsearched-out corners of this our luxurious capital! Alas for our fellow-beings who are chained down by their destitution within those prison-houses of crime and want, the courts and the alleys, which are the very nests of sin and misery!

Marrable at last penetrated to the very bottom of one of these no-thoroughfare avenues. The houses were of the lowest class, and looking as if they were in danger of every moment crumbling away; the windows cracked and broken, some with paper pasted over their orifices, others with bundles of old rags crammed into them. Many times was Marrable on the point of turning back; but however loathsome the road, his direction was so plainly written down that he could not persuade himself into the belief that he could not understand it, and at last he came to the domicile indicated in his paper.

'Does a man of the name of Muggeridge live here?' asked Marrable of a little dark, sharp-eyed, suspicious-looking man.

'What may you please to want with him? What is your business with him?' counter-asked the man.

'What business is that of yours?' retorted Marrable.

'Civil words cost nothing,' said the man.

'You are an impertinent fellow,' said Marrable. 'Why don't you give me a straightforward answer?'

'Least said 's soonest mended,' observed the man sullenly.

'I ask you once more where I can find the man Muggeridge?'

'In his shoes, in his coat, in his hat, if he happen to have any.'

'Very well—very well. This is all very fine, no doubt,' said Marrable; 'but it is of no consequence. I shall take other means. I'm not to be baffled.'

'Well then, if you must know,' said the man with a peculiar and sinister expression of face—'if you must know, he's gone out as a settler to New South Wales.'

'Ah, indeed!' exclaimed Marrable, with a long-drawn breath. 'Ah, indeed!'

'So you see, sir, he can't be hunted out, and you know when a thing is not to be had, the queen must lose her right.'

'Ah, true, true,' said Marrable, half mutteringly. 'What will Captain Ravenall think?'

'Captain who did you say, sir?'

'O, nothing! nothing! it is a thing of no consequence, none in the world. Good-day, my good man!' and so saying, Marrable hurried off with sudden precipitation.

'Now what did he want?' said the man to himself as he gazed doubtfully after him. 'Was it mischief or not? He does not look much like a John Doe or a Richard Roe. Perhaps I've hindered Muggeridge some piece of good luck, and I had not need, for he's low enough in the world already, but I did it for good any how. Captain Ravenall! but perhaps that was all fudge. Here, you Mike,' said he, addressing a cunning-looking, ragged, half-barefooted boy. 'Dodge that gentleman, Mike, and see where he lives, and what's his name. Go after him like his shadow, Mike, only don't let him see you. Manage it cleverly, and I'll give you a sixpence the next money I get.'

Whereupon Mike departed.

Marrable sat in his quiet backroom in Bloomsbury; everything was so silent, that the very stillness seemed a weight upon him. He never remembered that it had had the same effect upon him before. He seemed to *hear* his own thoughts in the oppressive silence of the place.

There was a change in Marrable during the last twenty-four hours—a change in the expression of his face.

'It is but borrowing,' said Marrable to himself, 'it is but borrowing. I cannot at this moment return the money to Captain Ravenall—he has sailed for India. If he were here, he would lend it me—I know he would. The loan of it would make my fortune, and of what use could it possibly be to let it lie idle in my pocket-book? The poor man has gone out to settle at New South Wales. I cannot follow him there. But *has he gone?* There was something in that man's manner. Yet why should he say so if he had not? Yes, certainly he has gone.'

Marrable passed a sleepless night. He looked haggard, and ten years older in the morning in his glass; but doubtless the glass was oblique, askant, and in a state of misapprehension and mistake; so he dressed with more than ordinary care to hide a certain something which neither self-love nor vanity could approve, and sallied forth to make those purchases which he fondly hoped would enhance his value at Quaife Hall, of which he now confidently trusted that he should soon be heir apparent.

Everything went on very prosperously. Marrable had good taste, and he manifested it in the choice of his cab. It was the prettiest shape imaginable, and painted the prettiest of greens, picked out with the daintiest of whites. He also managed to get a piebald horse with a particularly good physiognomy, and his harness was unimpeachable; he likewise engaged a servant—of course a necessary adjunct to his gentility; and, with all those 'means and appliances to boot,' Marrable assumed the appearance of a station in society which he fondly trusted would render his pretensions to the Quaife Hall heiress not altogether out of keeping.

The morning on which Marrable was to drive down to Seven Oaks in his new equipage arrived. His cab was at the door, his portmanteau was packed, his servant was holding the reins, his hat was on, his gold-headed whip in his hand; the little boy, all over buttons, who acted as page to the establishment, was standing bowing and bowing at the door, in hopes of coming in for loose half-crowns, and Marrable himself was pausing and deliberately drawing on his gloves, surveying his new apparatus of gentility with an air of no small pride.

'Any letters for me to be forwarded to Quaife Hall, Seven Oaks,' said Marrable.

The little boy bobbed his head down to his buttons.

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'Send them down to Quaife Hall, Seven Oaks, Kent,' repeated Marrable, who seemed to have a pleasure in the sounds which syllabled out the signification of his hoped-for inheritance. 'Quaife Hall, Seven Oaks, Kent. Ha! what have we here?'

This ejaculation was occasioned by the sight of a tall, gaunt, hollow-eyed man, who seemed almost in the last stage of starvation. His shabby, worn-out clothing hung on him in large wrinkles. His look was half wild, half fierce—that expression which no human being should ever be goaded into wearing. Marrable's eye was for a moment riveted upon him, and then it wandered on to a long train of poor, forlorn, beggarly-looking children, who, like a patriarchal tribe, were following close upon the heels of the head of the family, who was carrying his youngest heir to the misery of the world in his arms. Marrable counted nine of these starving, staring, (those who are starving always stare,) lanky, long, lean specimens of human nature with a sort of repulsive feeling, quite consistent with his usual good taste.

'Stand out of the way,' said Marrable; 'don't you see that I can't get to my carriage through your brood?'

'We want to speak to Mr. Marrable,' said the man. 'Does he live here?—is he at home?'

An ashy paleness came over Marrable's face. His knees knocked against each other—his tongue clove to the roof of his mouth—his heart actually boomed in its beatings. He had it on his lips to deny his own name, and leap into his cab, and drive off; but he was surrounded by people who would hear the falsity, and without doubt unveil it. And why was all this? Because he felt a conviction that it was Muggeridge and his starving family who were trooping before him.

'This way,' faltered Marrable.

The poor gaunt man gave his youngest child into the arms of his eldest, and, leaving his tattered and miserable offspring to admire Marrable's turn-out and his piebald horse, the wild-looking man in the shabby coat followed Marrable into a side-room.

'Now,' said Marrable, 'what is it that you want with me? Who are you? What is your name?'

'My name is Muggeridge,' said the man.

Marrable would have been much obliged to anybody who would have shot him at that moment.

'What do you want with me?' asked Marrable.

'I was in hopes you wanted something with me,' said Muggeridge.

'What could you think I wanted with you?'

'You went to my poor lodgings and mentioned Captain Ravenall's name, and I did hope he might have sent me my five hundred pounds.'

'Five hundred pounds!' said Marrable. 'Do you say that he owes you five hundred pounds?'

'Yes, and for years. That five hundred pounds has been my ruin. I was in comparative opulence in those days;—that was the beginning of my misfortunes—everything went wrong after that!'

Marrable listened to what he said merely to gain time to consult within himself what line he should pursue—whether he should go into the commiserating line, or the indignant line, or the not understanding him sort of line, or what.

'Yes, everything went wrong,' resumed Muggeridge, 'from that day to this. The loss of that five hundred pounds made me that I could not meet my payments—my goods were taken from me by an execution—I was thrown into prison—my wife fretted herself to death—and here I am, with my nine miserable children, without either house or home!'

'But that person, at that house where I had been directed to, told me that you had gone out to New South Wales.'

'I am going,' said Muggeridge, 'but not gone.'

'I wish you were with all my heart!' thought Marrable.

'I am sorry that he misled you,' said Muggeridge; 'but he knew that I had had trouble enough, and he thought you were one of my creditors.'

'Well,' said Marrable, 'I am very sorry for you, and I will tell you what I will do—I'll write to Captain Ravenall.'

'Write to him! Ay! ay!—"Live, horse, and you shall have hay!"'

'Oh!' exclaimed Marrable, 'five hundred pounds are always useful.'

'But,' said Muggeridge, 'I am just going to New South Wales with my poor children, and Captain Ravenall is already off to India. Ay, ay, hopes that come to nothing are bitter things—I wish I had not heard another word about it!'

And the large salt globules, which are the outward signs of inward misery, coursed each other down his care-furrowed cheeks. O, a man's tears are terrible things!

'I wish you hadn't with all my heart!' thought Marrable.

'I love old England,' said Muggeridge. 'It's hard to be driven from one's own fireside.'

'O, but you are going to a fine country—fine climate—very encouraging—very prosperous—great opportunities for such men—you will make a fortune.'

'They tell me that my children, who drag me down here, will pull me up there.'

'They are quite a property. No doubt you will do well. Nothing now to be done in England. And pray when do you go?'

'We came up this morning to get a few matters together, and to-morrow we go down to Gravesend—the ship is lying there.'

'Well, I wish you a fair voyage. Good morning, good morning. You see I'm rather in a hurry—going into the country.'

Muggeridge wiped away a large tear on his coat-sleeve. He walked to the door with the air of a man who had been so used to beating down, that he had lost the inherent right of his native independence. When with his foot just upon the threshold, and when Marrable thought that he had undergone the torture of reading the lines of his miserable face for the last time, it seemed suddenly to occur to him that he had left something undone.

'Then what did you want with me when you took so much trouble to find me, Mr. Marrable?"

The cowardice of conscience once more shook

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the strong man. His very spirit quailed. He felt that his face was livid, and his tongue parched, but he *would* fix his glazed eye upon his questioner's face, and constrain his yellow lips to open. *That moment was like the beginning of hell.*

'Captain Ravenall gave me your name, that I might know where to find you. He means to remit you the money. I wished to keep you in sight, and therefore I looked you out.'

'That was very good of you, to be sure. I wish you had been told the truth. Honesty is always the best policy.'

'I wish I had always thought so,' said Marrable to himself; 'I should not now have been in this accursed state—still, with *management*, I shall get through it. How I wish he was fairly off! But to-morrow I shall be safe, and after all, I am only borrowing the money. I will send it after him as soon as ever I am married. Of course I do not mean to wrong him. Ravenall made him do without it long enough, and I am only making a slight convenience of the loan for a very short time, not half nor a quarter so long as Ravenall. He can very well do without it a little longer, and, in fact, it will do him good, teach him to exert himself, and then what a pleasure it will be to him to receive it. But I really must do something for the poor fellow now. It will be quite a satisfaction to me. In fact, my feelings would not let me do otherwise.' And with this generous sentiment Marrable finished his soliloquy.

Marrable drew a particularly elegant purse from his pocket, through the crimson and gold meshes of which were glittering a whole regiment of sovereigns, as beautiful and attractive as our lady the Queen's face could make them, The hungry eyes of the gaunt, miserable man seemed to devour them. Alas! that a little of the dross of this earth should thus involve like a destiny the whole happiness of beings born unto immortality! 'Here,' said Marrable, as he slipped the rings and drew out five sovereigns, '*here are five sovereigns—you are as welcome to them as if they were your own.*'

A certain distinguished vehicle, commonly known by the name of a stage-coach, was once more raising a very fury of a dust on the road to Seven Oaks, in its endeavour to out-jehu a particularly genteel green and white cab that was flourishing on in its rear. The race was continued with great spirit on both sides for some time, but was at last decided in favour of the stage-coach, which drew up triumphantly, and with great animation and spirit, at the lodge-gate of Quaife Hall; and, as on a previous occasion, a certain gentleman descended from the right hand corner, and, after an interview with the same portmanteau and carpet-bag which has likewise been honoured with a former introduction, seemed to consider his journey finished. Room for the cab being now made, it came in second, and Marrable had the pleasure of driving past Wintringham through the lodge-gates and up to the hall-door in good style, in his own green and white cab, with his own piebald horse, his own servant, and his own everything, and all this in the eyes of Helen Quaife, and under the observation of the squire. This was very fine, especially as Wintringham was 'dragging his slow length along' on foot. Marrable felt himself to be A number one.

Helen Quaife looked more rosy, more redolent of health, more brimming full of spirits than ever. There is something very refreshing to the care-worn and withered of heart in coming in contact with the unblighted and unfaded freshness of beautiful young life. The cheerfulness of girlhood is something like the odour of a flower—it inspirits and delights us while we inhale it. Marrable, while gazing at her, began to find out that he could feel. His love-making was no fiction. As to Wintringham, nothing could be more indifferent and disagreeable than his manner, and Marrable congratulated himself heartily upon having a rival of such poor pretensions, and was sufficiently well pleased to see him saunter off with the dry, sly old squire, leaving him alone with Helen.

Marrable exerted himself to the utmost to entertain Miss Quaife, not in a facetious, but in a sentimental style; while she too, like all her sex, actuated by the spirit of contradiction, did nothing but laugh. Marrable used his eyes, and very good eyes they were—eyes that had been much approved—eyes that had never been found fault with—he used them, we say, to the very best of his ability. He looked lovingly, languishingly, die-awayingly, and punctuated his looks with emphatic sighs. He thought of every scrap, and rag, and tag of poetry that his memory had unwittingly torn off from their webs, and was as delightful as gallantry could make him; but still Helen Quaife did nothing but laugh, until Marrable got pretty sufficiently provoked, and thought that he had better transfer his attention to the squire, and find out if he were more comeatable.

So Marrable went out of the line of love-making, and went into that of making the amiable. The manner in which a gentleman plays off a lady is, of course, quite different to that in which he plays off a gentleman, requiring a different treatment altogether. Marrable thought that he developed the squire and Wintringham both of them to admiration, and it never once occurred to him that the old, dry, sly, retired merchant, who could be nothing better than cobwebbed with living in the country, could have the absurd vanity of thinking that he could penetrate so profound a politician and so skilful a manager as himself.

'Been reading any poetry, Mr. Marrable?' asked the squire. 'Reading any poetry? Seen anything of that poor little orphan book of poems that those stupid people in town sent me such a lot of copies of? Ha, Mr. Marrable, ha?'

'Now I'll give him a gilt pill,' thought Marrable to himself. 'Yes, I've seen them, sir, noticed in the reviews.'

'Ha! indeed, Mr. Marrable! and what did they say?' said the squire, with a wry face.

'As you said, sir, as we all said—that they were poor, trashy, miserable, vulgar things.'

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'Ha, indeed! Yes, I remember that you thought so.'

'And you thought so too.'

'Did I? O yes, certainly, they must be poor weak things.'

'Blind men are no judges of painting,' said Wintringham.

'Do you mean to say that Squire Quaife is blind to the beauty of that little volume of miserable tirade?'

'If he see no beauty, he must be blind.'

'Do you hear?' said Marrable to the squire.

'I do,' said the squire to Marrable.

'And *my* opinion,' said Marrable, 'goes for nothing; but of course I am very happy to be condemned in such good company as that of Squire Quaife.'

'I judge for myself,' said Wintringham; 'I know nothing of the author, but his book is rich in poetic feeling.'

'My dear Mr. Wintringham,' said the squire, with an air of extreme cordiality, 'you judge partially.'

'How can I be partial when the book is anonymous? No doubt, man of genius though he be, that the author is starving in a garret. Poverty is the heritage of poetry.'

'He had better turn cobbler,' said Marrable; 'that was what his mother, Nature, intended him for.'

'Excellent!' exclaimed the squire, with a face flooded with internal red; 'how I love to hear an impartial opinion. Go on, Mr. Marrable.'

'It is altogether quite beneath criticism.'

'Above the criticism of ordinary minds, you should say,' put in Wintringham.

'Go on, Mr. Marrable.'

'The very sweepings of the dust of literature. A sort of Billingsgate poetry.'

'Fit only,' said the squire, 'to sell as waste paper to wrap up red herrings and cheese.'

Marrable started. He did not understand his host. These were the very articles in which Squire Quaife had been said to trade.

'My dear Mr. Marrable,' said the squire, 'I owe you a thousand apologies. I feel that I am like a ship sailing under false colours. A man is so fond of hearing honest opinions of his own productions, especially of his literary bantlings, that I have been tempted into making you both speak honestly. I am of course rather obliged to Mr. Wintringham for his flattering defence of my poor work; but I am quite sure that yours, Mr. Marrable, is much the more correct. The truth is, that I have always had an inclination for poetry, even in the midst of my red herrings and cheese, and after making my fortune in commerce, and coming here to enjoy it, I felt the want of occupation, and wrote poetry to divert myself. This book of poems is mine, Mr. Marrable.'

Marrable hit himself a terrible blow upon his forehead with his open hand.

'Pray don't make yourself uneasy, Mr. Marrable. I assure you that my feelings towards you are not the least changed. I love an honest criticism. In fact, it is the greatest favour our friends can confer upon us to speak candidly of our productions. I am under great obligations to you, Mr. Marrable—I am, indeed, and I feel it. Perhaps your friendly reproofs may prevent me making a fool of myself again.'

Marrable rushed out of the room, as if he were in the greatest possible hurry to commit suicide.

'Idiot! dolt!' exclaimed Marrable, as he knocked his head against the trunk of a tree, 'I have ruined myself with that man for ever, by endeavouring to agree with him! Why did not I see through him? What an opportunity of rooting myself in his heart at once, if I had only had the sense to see through him and praise his book! and that blunderheaded Wintringham did it! No, it was only chance. I believe that the fellow meant what he said, for I knew all along that the book was a clever book. But I have done for myself! Let Quaife say what he will, he will hate me in his heart—irretrievably hate me! Men never forgive the wounds of their self-love—especially authors never can pardon an insult to their works. I am lost! lost! lost! and how well I might have managed him! What a glorious opening! what a golden opportunity! But Helen! can I manage her? Women are such simpletons! Can I get her into a private love affair? I saw her in the grounds. She knows nothing of this yet. Now female folly befriend me. I will go and try.'

Helen's rosy lips laughed out a merry peal at Marrable's introductory speech. It was all in vain that he rounded his periods well, and employed some passionate phrases, and sighed most musically, and turned up his eyes emphatically, and spoke in desperate whispers and was as honey-sweet as any laden bee. Helen was in such tiresomely disagreeable and ill-timed high spirits, that her adoring adorer could hardly keep his patience with her; and though he assured her with some large-mouthed asseverations, that he knew her upon the highest authority, to be of immeasurable and unweighable perfection, he yet had a secret idea that he could in his heart, as a recreation to his excited feelings, have found a particular pleasure in giving her a good shaking for her impertinence.

'I know the generosity of your character' said Marrable; 'that liberality of soul that would dispense empires, and yet you grudge me a particle of hope.'

'Well, that is odd enough,' said Helen; 'extravagant and yet a churl.'

'With all the refined sensibility of your heart, how, how can you be so regardless of my feelings?'

'There again!' laughed Helen; 'humane, and yet unfeeling to a degree.'

'With all your delicacy of perception, why will you be thus blind to my sufferings?'

'Very good eyesight, no need of spectacles, and yet blind.'

'O, Miss Quaife, if you could see my sufferings—if you could see what is passing in my inmost heart.'

'But you know that I can't. In the first place you are not transparent, and in the second, you know, I am blind.'

'Cruel to be thus deaf to my complaints.'

'Deaf as well as blind. Well, but, Mr. Marrable, you know that deafness is not at all a deli-

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cate failing, consistent with the refinement of my character. I don't think it gentlemanly of you to tell me that I'm deaf.'

'I shall go distracted.'

'No, don't—at least till I get out of sight. If you have any particular fancy for playing the extravaganza, pray, out of common civility, stay till I leave you.'

'O woman! woman!' in real agony of spirit, exclaimed Marrable.

'Now, that's very impolite. You should have said, O lady! lady! It's not treating me with proper respect.'

'O Helen! O Miss Quaife! lay aside this bantering, I beseech you. My wounded feelings will not let me bear it.'

'We don't know what we can bear till we are tried,' said Helen. 'I have heard very grave people say so a thousand times.'

'Give me hope, and I will bear anything,' said Marrable.

'How much would do? I believe that hope is sold by weight. I have heard tell of its being taken in grains.'

'Give me but the faintest glimpse of hope.'

'How much would do! What a pity that I am not a doctor! I must consult the homœopathic men. I am quite an homœopathist.'

'Can you see my distress unmoved?'

'No; I am intending to move directly. I am going to walk into the house.'

'Have you no feeling?'

'Why, I must say, that I get something like medical men. I see so much of the sufferings of sentimental souls, that I grow quite case-hardened. You don't know, Mr. Marrable, what a great deal of love-making I have brought to me. Such a number of gentlemen constantly go down on their knees to me, that I'm thinking of keeping a cushion near me for their accommodation; and I have such lots of love-letters you would hardly believe. I have them bound volume after volume, and indexed, and keep them in my boudoir, labelled on the outside. They are quite an ornament, for I make a point of paying them the compliment of having them elegantly bound.'

'Cold-hearted, unfeeling woman!'

'O not at all. I'm sure I would do anything to oblige you. If you like to write to me, I'll have your letter bound up in my next volume; only be so kind as to let it be on the best satin gold-edged post. I don't like common paper.'

Marrable hit himself a blow upon the head that would have knocked him down if he had not been prepared for it.

'Or, if you like better,' said Helen, 'send me a copy of verses. I keep a poetical miscellany open, too. But I forget—you don't like poetry, and I do.'

Maddened by this allusion, Marrable turned round and rushed into the house. He saw that all was lost, and his only object was to get out of everybody's way as fast as possible. He would order out his white-and-green cab, and summon his genteel servant, and lock up his respectable portmanteau, and cram his things into his good-looking carpet-bag, and he would drive—drive—drive—away—away—away.

Marrable rushed into the hall, breathless and inflamed, and there he saw—what? why the long, lanky, lean, gaunt, starving man, Muggeridge, with his nine reckless ragged children, standing in a row on one side, and Squire Quaife and Wintringham on the other.

Marrable felt that hell might begin on earth. A straw instead of a spear would have prostrated him. His eyes glared, his lips quivered, his knees shook.

'Mr. Marrable, I've got a letter from Captain Ravenall! It has followed me from lodging to lodging, and from place to place, and I had nearly lost it entirely, but by great good luck I got it last night. *I've come for my five hundred pounds.*'

'Take that! and that! and that!' shrieked Marrable, as he threw his glittering gilt-meshed purse, containing the remainder of the pestilential five hundred pounds on the hall floor, and dashed his gold watch after it, and hurled off his diamond ring. 'Take all! all! all!' and Marrable rushed out of that house which he had hoped to call his own, almost mad and almost a beggar.

'Nay, stop him!' exclaimed Wintringham, 'let us have some mercy!' but it was too late.

So much for *management*.

'And now, Helen,' said Squire Quaife, 'that we have got a little more composed, now that that poor man and his poetical number of children have gone to rest and refresh themselves, let us consult what we had better do with them?

'O give them a little cottage, papa, and make them happy, and keep them in the Old England that the man loves so much.'

'Well, but don't you think that as this poor fellow's five hundred pounds have been partly spent in your service, you are almost bound to make it up again?'

'Do it for me, papa,' said Helen.

'As for you, Mr. Wintringham, you contradict me so constantly, that if I had not acquired quite a taste for contradiction I should be apt to rebel.'

'Shall I give over?' asked Wintringham with a smile.

'No, no, I like it; especially when you contradict harsh criticisms on my poetry,' said the sly dry squire, with a smile; 'and since you are pleased to commend them, perhaps you will accept this copy with which I have the pleasure of presenting you?'

'Thankfully,' said Wintringham; 'and may I, or may I not, ask you for something else?'

'What is it?' said the squire.

'Even this,' said Wintringham, taking fair Helen's hand.

'Ah! a bold beggar!' said the squire. 'But I thought so! I thought so. Helen can do as she likes.'

So Helen did as she liked.

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THE LOVER'S REPROOF TO TIME.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

O Time! I could have wept to mark what thou
Hadst wrought of ruin on that cherish'd brow!
Where is the smooth unwrinkled snowy skin
That hardly prison'd the blue veins within?
Where the proud arches o'er the sunny orbs
Whose light the faculties of youth absorbs?
Where the clustering curls of raven hair
(Concealing Love's inevitable snare,)
Through which the burning cheeks in blushes broke,
Like roses by Hyperion awoke?
And where the lip—ah where! whose first coy kiss
Informed the heart the ecstasy of bliss;
Faded for ever! Age hath wither'd all!
What fascinations slumber 'neath thy pall,
O devastating Time! O cruel thief!
Why make the reign of loveliness so brief?
Why, with its fall, not Mem'ry too depose?
Mem'ry, the lover's bitterest of foes.
O would that face had met my gaze no more,
Then could I still the fallacy adore;
Fondly investing it with ev'ry charm,
And e'en thy scythe too *pitiful* to harm——
But now, its rueful change offends mine eyes,
And words of welcome die in pain'd surprise;
While to my bosom comes the sad appeal,
Can aught, save youth and beauty, break the seal
That locks the pulses where the passions rest,
To bid them thrill tumultuously the breast;
Wildest enthusiast but *once* can know
That dream, (the only dream exempt from woe,)
Decking the earth with Paradisean flow'rs—
Stealing the languor from grief's shackled hours,
Speeding on wings of hope each ling'ring thought,
Lending the soul alone those fancy-fraught,
And bidding it forestal one gleam of bliss
From Heaven's joys to light a world like this,
The dream of *boyhood love*, the purest, best,
Sent from the Godhead to the human breast!

HET KRUYS.

I am now going to tell you a simple village story, listened to one winter's evening beside a blazing hearth. And first of all, some preliminary explanations are needed. If you wish to travel as a poet and artist through busy fertile Belgium, all furrowed as it is by canals and railroads, you must quit for a while the noisy and animated atmosphere of its towns, overcharged with the somewhat dusky emanations of coal and turf, and not fear to follow its many cross roads and winding paths on foot. More than almost in any other country, you will then meet with places, rich in historic recollections as well as superstitious legends. Amongst the less frequented routes which yet traverse Brabant with a thousand sinuous windings, there is not, perhaps, one more picturesque and full of incident than that from Malines to Tilburg, passing by Herentals and Turkhout. In spring, the time of the year when I first saw its beauties, around you stretch lovely plains, carpeted with verdure, starred at each step by tufts of white daisies or the graceful blue bell; to these succeed thick woods with bushes of virgin hawthorn, scattering fragrance around, and clothing the gentle eminences near with green leaves and blossoms to their summits, there to be crowned by some feudal ruin breathing the very spirit of the past. Of all these resting-places of history, none exceed in interest that of the chateau of Wertensfeld in the middle of the forest of Holsters. The only remains now left are two round towers, half destroyed, and part of a chapel, whose walls in olden time formed part of a very ancient convent, which has altogether disappeared, and on whose foundations was built the main edifice, now levelled to the ground, of the chateau of Wertensfeld. Thus there are ruins piled on ruins, and in the wood one stumbles at each moment on heaps of stones, which make it evident that the dependencies of the chateau or convent formerly extended to a great distance. Within the line they embrace, exactly at the junction of the roads from Hoogstraeten to Eindhoven, with that from Malines to Tilburg, you would remark the base of an old stone cross, which has preserved the name of 'Het Kruys van de dood,' (the cross of the dead,) and which, solitary and alone, rose sadly not thirty years back in the centre of the wood of Holsters. It was called the cross of the dead, because one of the old priors of the convent, who, as it was said, had made a compact with the devil, was, many years ago, struck by lightning in the very place where, since the occurrence, the cross 'Het Kruys,' was erected as a memorial of the awful event. I chanced to be in its neighbourhood a short time back, but in a very different season, for it was winter, when, as night was coming on, I was surprised by a shower of rain so fast and penetrating, that I was compelled to stop at an isolated auberge, situate on the way-side, a short distance from Beckx, a small hamlet a league from Hoogstraeten. After having made a better supper than I expected to do in an auberge lost in the middle of a wood, I was desirous of seeing for myself whether there were any hopes of finer weather soon. So I opened the window, and gazed long and earnestly without. But I drew my head promptly in, for the wind blew right in my face, and, in less than a second, both it and my hands were covered with that small fine drenching rain which often wets one more thoroughly than a violent storm. Night fell thick and fast on the road from Malines to Tilburg. Mists veiled like grey clouds the plain and woods, and the wind driving the withered leaves before it, produced that sad and monotonous sound, which oftenest characterizes winter evenings in the country. 'Curse on it!' I said, returning to the hearth, on which a good fire of turf was blazing, 'impossible to resume my route before to-morrow morning.' And half-grumbling at, half-satisfied with the safe and commodious shelter I had found in my distress, I settled myself in the most comfortable manner

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I could in an old arm-chair, lined with rusty cotton velvet, which mine host had yielded up to me as the place of honour. If you have ever felt at night how sweet it is to hear the wind roar loud with a good roof over one's head, and the rain beat like hail against the close thick shutters, whilst your feet rest on the dogs of a blazing wood fire, you will then be able to comprehend, with something like truth, the comfortable state of my inner man, whilst all around me were engaged in the labours of the night. The servants hastened to put everything in order due in a cupboard bright with diligence and industry, and then came with their distaffs, and took their places in the circle which was formed round the ample hearth. Exactly opposite to my seat, the old hostess span silently and grave; next to her, her husband puffed forth clouds of smoke from his short tobacco-pipe, which he only now and then laid aside to drain enormous draughts from a goodly pot of beer, placed within his reach. In fine, one or two stable-boys and a few peasants were grouped near, some preparing hemp, others sharpening their farm-utensils. In the mean time the storm continued to increase in uproar and violence around the comfortable little auberge of Beckx.

'Vrai Dieu!' I exclaimed, drawing still closer to the fire; ''tis a thousand degrees better to be here at this moment than on the road which crosses the wood of Holsters.'

The peasants looked at me with surprise.

'He must be a bold man who would venture at this hour to try the road between Eindhoven and Hoogstraeten,' said one of them.

'How! is it not safe, then? are there any robbers hereabouts?'

'So 'tis believed at least,' answered my host; 'and it is certain that the dismal vaults of Wertensfeld have often passed for concealing a number of malefactors.'

'They must be rascals without faith or law who take up their abode at night and in ambuscade amongst the ruins of that chateau, which, as I am told, does not enjoy the odour of sanctity.'

'Bah! bah! all such reports are child's tales,' interrupted the hostess, without laying aside her work. ''Tis long since robbers disappeared from the neighbourhood of "Het Kruys," along with Jaën of Holsters and the black brotherhood of Wertensfeld. But the men of to-day have less courage than the young girls of my time! To hear you men now-a-days, one would say you never heard the story of Krettel of Hornberg.'

'Who are Krettel of Hornberg and Jaën of Holsters?' I asked with curiosity.

O! a long story, which made noise eno' formerly, but is now almost forgotten. Yet it was about a man, monsieur, who committed so many crime, that he became the terror of all Brabant, and of an entire troop of robbers acting under his command, who bore the name of the black brotherhood of Wertensfeld. They most certainly were wont to prowl about the woods of Holsters, and collected together every night at the cross-road of "Het Kruys," but since their arrest all has happily been changed.'

A story about robbers repeated thus, on a winter's evening beside the warm chimney hearth! It was a piece of good luck I could not neglect, so I addressed myself with such earnestness of entreaty to the worthy old dame, that she consented to become narrator without more ado. We drew nearer one another. I knocked the fire lustily, which blazed up cheerful and brilliant, and my hostess commenced her tale in these words:—

It is good forty-five years ago. Krettel de Hornberg, as she was named from the village where she was born, was then a pretty servant girl. In the whole country you could not have met with a lighter step or a merrier heart. Lively, joyous, quick at work as at the dance on fair-days, having an answer ever ready for the sly jokes of travellers, and idle compliments of the young peasants round about, she knew how to take an energetic decision if the occasion presented itself, which did not, however, deprive her of the charm and naïveté of a young girl. Therefore, as you may easily imagine, she neither wanted admirers nor lovers. Unfortunately, Krettel was not rich; an orphan from infancy, she was brought up by the charity of Widow Vanderstitchel, proprietress of the auberge of Beckx, and dearly paid that debt of gratitude by constant and unceasing labour in the service of a harsh and avaricious mistress. As you will doubtless think very natural, the son of the rich aubergiste, Michael Vanderstitchel, could not live constantly near Krettel without being touched by her good qualities, and the gracefulness of manner which each day more and more developed. But Michael was timid and shamefaced, especially in his mother's presence; he had never the courage to resist her imperative tone of voice, or rise above the empire she exercised on all around. He was not ignorant that she had determined on his marriage with the daughter of a rich farmer in the neighbourhood, and was incapable of showing the necessary energy to oppose such a project. Thus he had never ventured to speak to Krettel of his love, which he allowed her, however, to divine in secret; and if he smiled at the jealous sarcasms of the young men of the village, who were all his rivals, if he seemed by his conduct to authorize the report of certain evil tongues anent his passion for Krettel, and the tender return of which he was the object, it was rather to destroy suspicion, by the indifference he affected to feel, than from a wish to further his suit in the young girl's heart by their means. However, calumny cannot lie hid for ever, and Madame Vanderstitchel was not long in being informed of what was said about Krettel and her son. She had the most implicit reliance on her servant's propriety of conduct, but nevertheless could not avoid showing her ill temper, perhaps because of the very injustice of the report which had been spread abroad, an injustice which prevented her flying into a passion with Krettel, and sending her away in disgrace. Madame Vanderstitchel was easily roused, but had a kind heart at bottom, and it would have given her much pain to shut her doors on a poor girl who had no resource nor shelter but under her roof. Her ill-humour might at least avenge itself on the sweetness and innocence of Krettel,

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and for some time, to do her justice, she did not spare either. Constantly were reproaches, the most unjust, poured forth on Krettel's devoted head. 'Slut!' 'Idiot!' such were the choice epithets which, each instant, were tacked to her name, and she was at her wit's end how to pacify storms of daily, nay hourly occurrence, whose cause her heart but too well divined, when an event, as extraordinary as unexpected, and one which entirely changed her position in life, took place.

It was evening in the month of June, 1790. Michael was from home; Krettel and Madame Vanderstitchel busied in removing the remains of a supper they had just served to some travellers, and inhabitants of the environs. At the close of the repast, at the moment when the conversation had become more general, and the pipes of all were lighted, the men amused themselves by relating amongst each other stories of supernatural apparitions seen at 'Het Kruys'; they talked a great deal also about the numerous thefts which were each night committed in the neighbourhood, and the assassinations which often took place, as they said, near the cross-roads of the ruins of Wertensfeld. All were agreed in attributing such crimes to a mysterious association of malefactors, a band of robbers, to which had been given the name of 'The Black Brotherhood of Wertensfeld,' and, as it was asserted, collected together in the woods of Holsters, under the order of one named Jaën, long celebrated throughout Brabant for his cruelty as well as address. And, as ever happens on such occasions, each in his turn improved on what he heard. These fearful stories were listened to by some with a blind confidence in their truth, and by others with undisguised contempt. At this moment might be remarked a stranger, whose costume announced an opulent farmer, and who having entered the cabaret at the end of the meal, had asked for a pot of beer, placed himself at the end of the table, and seemed to listen with attention to what was told about Het Kruys.

'The other night,' said one of the peasants, 'Mays Van Cools passed alone by the ruins on returning from Tilburg, and was attacked by four men in masks, who threw him down and took from him all the silver on his person.'

'Mays Van Cools is a coward; who the devil can believe him?'

'The night before last, about midnight, farmer Peters Waersagers was on horseback, and near the old chateau, when he saw issuing from the chapel a kind of shadow, which perseveringly hung on his heels, and, despite his utmost efforts, he could never get rid of it. Did he press his horse to a quicker pace, he still saw the shadow remaining noiselessly behind him on the edge of the road. Did he slacken his course, the shade instantly stopped, ever preserving sufficient distance so as to prevent him making out what it was. A cold sweat bedewed all his limbs and trickled from his brow; but matters were much worse when he reached "Het Kruys," for he suddenly heard himself called on to stop by a man whom he instantly recognized for Jaën of Holsters, and who cried out to him in a terrible voice ——'

'Well, Miss Idleback, what are you doing there motionless, and your mouth wide open?' broke in at this moment the Widow Vanderstitchel, rudely pushing Krettel away, who for some short time had been listening with wrapped attention to the story of farmer Waersagers. Startled by so unexpected an apostrophe, she let fall the plate she held in her hand, and it broke into a thousand fragments. A burst of laughter from all followed the crash of the crockery. The anger of Madame Vanderstitchel may easily be imagined.

'Fool! stupid idiot! you are always doing some mischief or other. Very fine, indeed, for you to stand with your arms dangling idly like the busybody you are, and give way to silly fears, to affected delicacies, like a young girl that has never left a town. I know not what prevents me from turning you out of doors this very instant, good-for-nothing.'

It was the first time Madame Vanderstitchel had openly spoke of sending her away. Therefore did such a threat cause the young girl's heart to feel a bitter pang. In the mean time the peasant had already resumed the interrupted story.

'Well, as I was just now telling you, it was Jaën himself, in flesh and blood, who thus stopped the unhappy Waersagers. 'I expected thee,' he said, at the same time clapping the muzzle of a pistol to his head; 'instantly get off thy horse, for I and thou have an old account to settle.' In a moment the farmer saw himself surrounded on all sides by the black brotherhood of Wertensfeld, who stripped him of every valuable in the twinkling of an eye. And very lucky it was for him, for under pretext of that theft so marvellously à-propos, Peters Waersagers refused to pay a sum he was much pressed to do, and obtained fresh time from his compassionate creditors. The accident was, in fact, a fortunate occurrence for him. I fancy there's about as much truth in it as the other strange stories so glibly told of the black brotherhood of Wertensfeld.'

'Tis all very fine, my master,' interrupted the stranger, taking part in the conversation, 'but yet I'll wager a trifle that none of those here, who show so much incredulity, dare venture to repair alone at this late hour to the cross-roads of Wertensfeld. Come, let us see,' he added, drawing out his purse; 'this piece of gold shall be his who, with this bit of red chalk, will go and write his name on Het Kruys, and bring us back a branch of the wild box which grows beside it.'

On hearing this singular proposition, the assembled peasants turned towards the stranger, whose eyes had assumed an expression of contemptuous cunning, and gazed on him silently and long; but none seemed disposed to accept the challenge. At this moment a soft and gentle hand pressed lightly on the shoulder of the unknown.

'Give me the piece of gold,' said Krettel, whose eyes were yet filled with tears, 'and I will go to the cross-ways of Het Kruys.'

'Thou, young girl!'

'Krettel! bravo, Krettel!' cried all the peasants, laughing loud, and clapping their hands.

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'I will go,' continued Krettel resolutely. She took the morsel of red chalk, and threw her eyes on the Widow Vanderstitchel. 'It will thus be seen whether I have not more courage than a town-bred girl.'

Madame Vanderstitchel would doubtless have opposed Krettel's rash design, but the young girl had taken the piece of gold, and, despite the darkness of the night, darting through the door, already disappeared.

When she suddenly decided on accepting the stranger's challenge, Krettel had but one motive, that of atoning for her clumsiness, and proving to Mad. Vanderstitchel that she was not so faint-hearted and timid as she thought; and then that threat which had been made her of driving her from the auberge, the thought of being compelled to take her departure, of being for ever separated from Michael—all—all—had impelled her to brave a moment's fear. But when she found herself all alone in the dark wood at an advanced hour of the night, far from every habitation, and in a place of which so many fearful things were told, her heart began to beat with quick and hurried movement, and she was compelled to invigorate her drooping courage by the thought of all she might gain from perseverance and lose by failure. Already had she almost traversed the gloomy forest of Holsters, already did she perceive looming on a far-off height the dreaded walls of the chateau of Wertensfeld. The sky was dark and menacing, thick vapours rolled heavily along in space; they veiled and unveiled by turns the pale rays of the sickly moon, who herself seemed gliding rapidly on her way to take shelter behind the lowering cloud. The alternate light and shade rendered the savage aspect of those desolate and dismal places yet more striking and fearful. The sight of the chapel of the chateau, with its half-ruined arches, whose sculptured and indented outlines were darkly defined against an horizon of greyish hue; the tufts of lichens and other creepers which clustered over the fallen building; the gigantic masses of forest trees, that stretched majestically around; in fine, the old stone cross which, sad and solitary, rose from its sunken pedestal at the deserted cross-road, where the four ways leading into the neighbouring woods joined together, all contributed, with the silence that reigned around, to increase with tenfold force the terrors of the poor young girl. However, like the spirit of the ruins amidst the surrounding darkness, she still advanced, making the least noise possible, and painfully retaining even the breath, when, at the moment of her reaching the foot of Het Kruys, she distinctly saw a flash from beneath the vaults of the chapel; at the same instant, a singular noise which sounded near her made her turn her head, and she perceived in mute alarm a horse ready bridled and saddled, a valise on his back, pawing the ground with impatience, fastened as he was to the branches of a tree under whose shade he seemed awaiting the arrival of his master. There was no longer room for doubt—the place was then really inhabited by the Black Brotherhood of Holsters! She instantly fell on her knees on the steps of Het Kruys, piously invoked the protection of Heaven, and then, after having with the bit of red chalk traced her name hurriedly on the pedestal, and broken off a branch of wild box, she hastened to resume her way back to the auberge, but as she turned towards the chapel, a human form, whom terror prevented her from clearly distinguishing, rose erect in one of its roofless aisles.

'Stop!' cried an imperious voice, which was repeated by all the startled echoes of Wertensfield.

Then Krettel perceived that promptness of resolution and great presence of mind could alone save her from death, or something worse. The shrill sound of many whistles ran loud and clear through the resounding ruins; a pistol was fired, but she luckily escaped all injury in the surrounding thick gloom. Hastily did she unfasten the horse, throw herself into the saddle, and dart off at a gallop on the road to Becks.

Ten minutes after, completely breathless, Krettel reached the door of the auberge, where she was received with acclamation by all the peasants, who praised her courage high, and with mute but expressive tenderness by Michael Vanderstitchel, who, on his return home, having learnt with much disquietude what had taken place, was just on the point of setting out to meet her at the cross-ways of Het Kruys. Krettel hastened to relate what had befallen her, and each then admired the beauty of the horse of which she had thus possessed herself, and which it was evident must have belonged to the chief of the band of robbers himself. The valise contained some articles of men's apparel, and four thousand livres in gold. At sight of so large a sum, all present cried out the more loudly, declaring that the poor girl had well earned it all, and Mad. Vanderstitchel, in her exuberant joy, nearly stifled her in a warm embrace. Then the aubergister, without further explanation, locked up the four thousand livres in a strong-box, and had the horse bedded up in her stable. It was only at this moment that it was for the first time perceived with surprise that the stranger was no longer in the hall, without any one being exactly able to tell when he left it.

However, the next day being Sunday, Mad. Vanderstitchel dressed herself in her best at an early hour in order to go and hear mass at Turkhout, and at the same time give information to the officers of justice, for she was anxious to know whether the horse and his burden might be considered a lawful capture. But before setting out, she enjoined Krettel to take great care of the house in her absence.

'Clean the pewter dishes well, child,' she said, 'and get ready breakfast. We—my son and me I mean—shall soon return.'

'And we'll go this evening to the kennesse of Hoogstraeten,' said Michael, gazing tenderly on Krettel.

'And I will bring thee a silk apron and maline handkerchief with crimson spots from Turkhout,' resumed Mad. Vanderstitchel, embracing her.

'Courage, I have good hopes!' whispered Michael in her ear, and squeezing her hand.

'Adieu, Krettel, adieu, my daughter! Thou

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remainest alone,' therefore take great care of everything, and mind the business of the house as well as that of the kitchen.'

In the intoxication of her delight, Krettel stood on the threshold of the door until her eyes ached, gazing earnestly after Mad. Vanderstitchel and her son as long as she could see them wending their way on the road to Turkhout. Then, at length, she entered the house with a gentle sigh, and set to work with ardour and diligence, thinking all the while on what Michael had said to her in a low voice. And if any one from the top of one of the eminences about Holsters had cast his eyes on the high road, he might then have seen a man of lofty stature, enveloped in an ample cloak, cautiously leaving the wood where he had kept concealed whilst Michael and his mother passed by, cast a look at the many windings of the pathway to see if they had disappeared, and at length bend his steps towards the auberge of Beckx, after have first made sure of the solitude and silence which reigned around.

Krettel reflected long and deeply within herself after the departure of Michael and his mother. Never had she experienced so much happiness at any one time. Mad. Vanderstitchel had called her her child, Michael pressed her hand and bid her hope. Hope! what a joyous future, and what happy projects did the poor young girl build on that single word! A few minutes had scarce flown away when she heard a knock at the door. She hastened to open it, and it was with a surprise somewhat mixed with uneasiness, that she found herself in the presence of the unknown, who the evening before had thrown out the challenge to go during the night and write her name on the pedestal of Het Kruys.

'Well,' said the man to Krettel, 'here thou art, young girl, who so cleverly makest laughing-stocks of the brotherhood of Holsters, and venturest all alone to brave the general terror which they inspire by the dead man's cross. I could never have suspected so much courage under such a pretty face, nor in that sweet and timid look of thine.'

The strange tone with which he uttered these words froze the life-blood at Krettel's heart.

'What mean ye?' she hesitatingly asked.

'Listen,' he roughly replied; 'this is no time for concealment. I am Jaën, the chief of the Black Brotherhood of Holsters. It was my horse thou stoledst away at Het Kruys, and I am now come to demand an explanation from thee for the audacity of thy conduct yesternight in the ruins of Wertensfeld.'

Krettel, half dead with alarm, fell trembling on her knees.

'Mercy! mercy, monsieur!' she said, clasping her hands; 'take back your gold, and do not kill me!'

Jaën laughed aloud. 'Kill thee, Krettel! and who ever had such a thought! Listen attentively. On the contrary, I am charmed at thy bold conduct, at the unshrinking courage of which thou hast given proof. I tell thee, wench, thou art affianced to me by writing thy name on the stone base of Het Kruys, and I am resolved to take thee back with me to the ruins of Wertensfeld, amidst the forest of Holsters. I will make thee my companion, my mistress, or my wife, as thou mayest please.'

'Holy Virgin!' exclaimed the girl, writhing her arms in despair.

'What dost fear? With me consider well thou wilt enjoy perfect freedom, shalt have gold, rich clothes, and joyous banquets in abundance. 'Tis no ordinary robber that speaks to thee, but the chief of a determined band of freebooters, who will all respect thee as the sharer of thy master's bed, and pay thee tribute. There are more joys than thou thinkest of in our unknown retreats. 'Tis my bushy eyebrows, my thick beard, my severe looks which frighten thee, I see. By Beelzebub, my patron, I never knew what it was to court a pretty girl, or play the lovesick swain by her side, but a passion worthy of thee lies hid, however, beneath this rude exterior. Come then, fool that thou art, thy heart is warm and free—come to my arms, let me press thy bee-like waist, and snatch a kiss from those pleasure-provoking lips of thine.'

Krettel darted to the other side of the room, and hastened to put the table between Jaën and her.

'No!' she cried, doubtless reckoning much on this new means of defence, 'my heart is not free. I love Michael Vanderstitchel, the son of my mistress. He is to marry me next spring. O monsieur, do not destroy me.'

'Tis false! by all the devils that were ever spawned! Thou must have lied, I say—confess it quick!' and in his anger the brigand drew a large knife from his belt, and hurled it across the table with such force that the blade was plunged quivering up to the hilt in the thickness of the wooden wall. Nevertheless, when he saw the terror printed on the young girl's features, he made a gesture as though to stop himself. 'Come, come—I am wrong,' he said; 'let us lay aside this war of words; but remember, my beauty, I never beseech in vain—thou art henceforth mine. Thou must needs penetrate the mysteries of Wertensfield, and now our safety imperatively requires that we make sure of thee. Thou must either die or become my companion. Choose then!—And now draw me some beer, and set some glasses down. I expect two of my band anon, and hope before their arrival to have appeased thy reluctance, and silenced those scruples of thine which offend me.'

Krettel hastened to serve him, hoping thereby to turn away his attention from herself, and thus escape his brutal advances. She lighted a lamp, raised a trap-door, which opened in the hall itself, and descended a flight of steps. But scarce had she passed the lowest, and reached a cold damp passage, than she heard steps behind, which she doubted not were those of Jaën following her. The wretch, doubtless, hoped in a place so small to reduce his victim more easily to his vile purpose. Then terror inspired Krettel with a desperate resolution. The moment she saw him enter the passage, she blew out the light, glided swiftly between him and the wall in the dark, and before he could recover from his surprise had darted up the ladder, let down the trap, thrown upon it the table and kitchen dresser, and fallen breathless on her knees to thank Heaven for having thus miracu-

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lously escaped the danger which had threatened her.

Krettel was yet all agitation, anxiously listening to the robber, who dashed himself furiously against the trap, uttering fierce blasphemies, when she heard a loud knock at the door of the auberge. To rush in a moment thither, to lock and double-lock and bolt the door, was the work of a moment, for she guessed that the applicants for admission must be the villains whom Jaën du Holsters expected. Surprised at not receiving an answer, the two men pushed on one side the shutter of a small low window, defended by iron bars, and casting a look into the interior of the house, they first discovered Krettel, whom fear had nailed to the place. The robbers were disguised as mendicants.

'My good girl,' said one of them, with an hypocritical drawling twang, 'have compassion on two poor wretches who have not tasted food since yesterday.'

'Go away, I have nothing for you,' was the reply.

'We have travelled the whole night from Tilburg, and are worn out with fatigue. Give us a morsel of bread for mercy's sake, and allow us to rest an instant in this auberge.'

'No—it is impossible,' said Krettel.

'You treat us very harshly,' resumed the man with distrust, for the short sharp tone of the young servant, her extreme paleness, and doubtless also the disorder which reigned in the apartment, began to give rise to some suspicions in his mind. 'Have you not seen on the road near here a man of elevated stature, wrapped in a brown cloak, and whose head was covered by a broad-brimmed hat?'

'Not a soul! I am alone—I have not seen a soul!' interrupted Krettel quickly, whose terror augmented in proportion with the obstinacy of the two men to remain at the grated window.

At this moment Jaën again threw his body violently against the cellar trap, for, as he heard a faint murmur of conversation with the young girl, he suspected that his allies were at hand.

'Help!' he howled from the depth of his prison-house. 'Help, comrades! beat in the door!'

'Ha! ha!' cried the robbers, laying aside all further attempt at dissimulation, and instantly assuming a tone of menace. 'What is that we hear below there? We counsel thee, m'amie, to open us that door, if thou wouldst not make acquaintance with the point of our knives.'

Krettel once more recalled her failing courage to her aid. She threw back the shutter of the small low window, which was besides sufficiently defended by the iron bars, and bolted it fast—O! how her fingers trembled!—and seizing Michael Vanderstitchel's gun, mounted to the first story, took her place at a window, levelled her piece at the two brigands, who were endeavouring to force open the stout old oaken door, and threatened them with death if they did not instantly depart. At the same time, in order to prove that it was no vain bravado, she fired and instantly recharged her weapon. The robbers held a council, and a few minutes after one of them recommenced his efforts against the door, which happily was, as we before said, stout and thick, whilst the other made the tour of the house to discover a weaker side by which he might gain admittance. Our heroine then flew on the wings of the wind, and barricaded every other outlet. For a long time she sustained this species of siege unflinchingly, and kept thus in check all the rage and mad attempts of the Black Brotherhood of Wertensfeld. A large stack of straw chanced to be in the court; the wind blew from the north; there was then no danger that the flames would be carried to the roof of the house; with her usual address Krettel profited by the circumstance. She seized a flaming brand, hurled it from the window on the stack, and in a few moments a bright red flame darted up, and called for the assistance of the neighbourhood. She also seized the rope of a large bell, destined to summon the servants of the auberge from their out-door work to meals, and rang it lustily and without ceasing, scattering thus the alarm far and wide, whilst with the musket, which she pointed every moment, she kept the men of Jaën's band at a respectful distance.

'Hag! devil's dam! Wilt hold thy cursed noise?' cried the brigands, with an explosion of frantic rage difficult to express.

'Wait! wait!' said one of them, who had managed to scale one of the walls and get upon the roof. 'We will soon silence thee with a vengeance!' and he crept into the kitchen chimney, intending by that means to make good his entrance. Krettel hastily descended, and threw two or three fagots of green vine branches on the embers. The smoke ascended in clouds, and speedily suffocated, asphyxiated the wretch. He fell heavily, his dress on fire, and half dead, on the kitchen floor. At that moment the door gave way and was beaten in. The young servant turned round in speechless terror, for she fancied she was lost without resource, but she instantly recognized her mistress, and all the inhabitants of Beckx, who had run in haste to learn the cause on hearing the sound of the alarm-bell as well as seeing the fire, and fainted in the arms of Michael. It is scarcely necessary to add that the capture of Jaën and the two robbers brought on the arrest and execution of the rest of the band of the Black Brotherhood of Holsters. As a testimony of the country's gratitude for so eminent a service, the sum of gold which she had so cleverly taken away from the ruins of Wertensfeld was granted to Krettel as a dowry. She was henceforth rich, and Mad. Vanderstitchel, touched by her devotion, no longer opposed her marriage with her son. The ensuing spring, as she had herself said, Michael led her blushing and happy to the altar of the village church, and a few years after, Mad. Vanderstitchel having paid the debt of nature, Krettel at length found herself mistress of that auberge in which she had so long and so diligently filled the place of servant.

'Indeed!' I exclaimed, after having listened to the story with much interest. 'Krettel deserves better things than so obscure and tranquil a happiness. I would give this chain of gold to have known her, and obtained the kiss she refused to Jaën du Holsters.'

'You will have no trouble in doing so, mon-

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sieur,' interrupted my hostess with a malicious smile, 'for you see before you Krettel and Michael Vanderstitchel.'

At sight of the wrinkled visage of the worthy old dame I soon felt my enthusiasm for the young and pretty servant of the inn of Beckx cool down to zero. But that circumstance, perhaps, added a fresh charm to the events of the evening. It was the fact that I was then in the presence of Krettel and Michael, the house where I had taken shelter was the very old auberge of Beckx, the trap-door which opened in a corner of the apartment was the identical one which had fallen on the head of Jaën of Holsters; and the next morning, when, after having taken leave of my kind hosts, I resumed the road from Tilburg to Malines, it was with a new interest that I passed through the ruins of Wertensfeld, and perceived afar off, at the junction of the way leading from Hoogstraeten to Eindhoven, the degraded remains and solitary base of 'Het Kruys.'

THE AGED.

BY MRS. ABDY.

Oh! oft the minstrel's lay describes, with warm and fervent truth,
The lovely days of childhood, and the blushing spring of youth;
It dwells upon the season of life's sweet and sunny prime,
But seldom does it chronicle its dark and winter time.

Yet ever on the aged with deep reverence I look,
Their inmost thoughts I liken to a wise and wondrous book,
Enriched with lavish histories of scenes and times of yore,
That never can be given to the eye of mortal more.

We, in the summer-glow of health, may joyously expect
To pass along the ways of life by chance and change unchecked;
But while we trace our future course, and future knowledge crave,
A year, a day, an hour, alas! may lay us in the grave.

But they already have enjoyed the brief and fleeting span
By Providence allotted as the common life of man;
And all the wisdom time imparts to benefit our race,
Hath in their full-fraught minds secured a certain dwelling-place.

We oft retrace our early youth, and sorrowfully cast
Reflections on our follies in the season that is past;
May not the aged in their turn reflect and reason thus?
May they not mourn the follies that they still descry in us?

Oh! why should we despise them then, and wilfully forego
The treasures of experience they would readily bestow?
Even as the meek and docile child receives our counsel sage,
So ought we humbly to regard the warning voice of age.

They ever should be viewed by us with love and awe, they stand
On the threshold of another world, a mystic spirit-land,
They should be cherished and revered as tenants of the sod,
Soon to receive their summons to the mansion of their God.

Let us prize them as his hostages, held precious in our sight,
As receiving signal favour from the Lord of power and might;
Man may bestow the goods of wealth, of honour, rank, and praise,
But God alone can give to us the boon of lengthened days.

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SPENCER MIDDLETON; OR, THE SQUIRE OF RIVER HILL.

BY GEORGE STANLEY, ESQ.

CHAPTER V.

The College of St. Luke's, its inmates and their clubs.

DURING our hero's absence from Oxford, I have a strong, a very strong inclination to enter somewhat particularly into the peculiarities, beauties, and deformities of the architecture and inhabitants of St. Luke's. Were I, however, to give way to this sudden impulse, and to dilate, even for a moment, on the variety of the former, and the idiosyncracy (that is the present fashionable term) of the latter, there is not a college or hall in all Oxford that would not forthwith claim to itself, and for itself, some one or more of those towers, chimneys, windows, groves, gables, or cloisters, with which our imaginary college might be ornamented or defaced; whilst every head of house, and every college tutor, cook, dean, butler, sub-dean, scullion, bursar, and porter, would not fail to recognize each their neighbour's portraits, in the Reverend M. A. or Mr. Patypan, and, backed by sundry members of convocation, hasten to vent on the unfortunate author all the terrors of the Oxford Vatican. Well, it must be admitted, that not one hundred miles from the old city of Oxford, (as the papers remark, when the overseer has walked off with the parish funds, or Ephraim Broadbrim with one of the Misses Scarecrows' young ladies,) not one hundred miles from the city of Oxford, lies the original of the college of St. Luke's. As to locality—our hero's college did not stand so near the London road as Magdalen, or so far towards Cheltenham as the Refuge for the destitute. It neighboured not on the fragrant meadows of the Isis, or the more fragrant courts of St. Ebbe's. It was not so nigh to the parks as Wadham, or so nigh to Jericho as Worcester. It was not—the fear of the Golgotha forbids a more accurate description of its 'whereabout.' Its tower was not equal to that of Merton; its bells rang not psalm tunes, as those of St. Edmund are fabled to do, or growled 'Short leg,' 'long leg,' with those of New College, or anathematized the frequenters of the chapel in that short but expressive form of excommunication in which the bells of Trinity and fishfags delight. Its quadrangles (what can induce the Cantabs to call them courts?) were not as large as those of Christchurch, or so small as that of Skimmery. Its gardens boasted not of the chestnuts of St. John's, nor the duck weed and apple-trees of Worcester.

No two colleges are ever alike, but no college ever differed from its neighbours so distinctly as St. Luke's did from the entire university, in the extraordinary good opinion its members entertained of it and of themselves, and the almost innumerable clubs of all kinds, natures, and descriptions, that held their meetings within its walls.

In one year, St. Luke's had gained nearly half the first classes, a dog-fight, a bishopric, the head of the river, the Newdigate, and a round dozen of plucks, and from that year nothing was, not only too good, but half good enough for a Lukian. If a Lukian did get his first, he was always the best man of the year, (as they said,) and the examiners were clearly afraid of him. If he did not get his first, he only just lost it, (as they said,) or the examiners could not understand him, he was too clever (so they said). If their boat got bumped, the keel was crooked, or start false, or the wind blew, or it did not blow. If their man lost the Newdigate, he was always next, (so they said,) and as no one could ever contradict them, people at last believed it. If a Lukian got plucked, O it was expected; if he did not, the masters of the schools had let him through to spite the college. If a bishopric fell vacant, the president of St. Luke's, or their pet preacher, was to have it; if he did, all was well; if he did not, O! he was waiting for the archbishopric of Canterbury—so they said. And yet with all this the college was a good creditable college; those who were not behind the scenes attributed it to the president or the tutors; those who were, hinted at the unlimited private cramming of the pets, and the shrewd method adopted by the president of picking the best boys from the public schools, by offering to the first half dozen who might be beaten in the contest for their scholarship, immediate residence if they would become Lukians; thus securing not only the one or two wonders of Eton, Rugby, or Winchester, but the six or so good average scholars who might have been beaten by the well-crammed precocious ones.

As for the clubs in St. Luke's—the *imperia in imperio*—they were in numbers numberless; their titles startling, their objects wondrous; their rules, precepts, and ordinances, well worthy the pen of the college chronicler. The boat-club, the book-club, the Ciceronians, the senior and junior debating-clubs, the archery-club, the rifle-club, the hunting-club, the Eclectic, the Pentad, one and all, in nearly equal proportions, contributed to the keeping alive ill will and bad feeling among the members of the college. Blackballing, fighting for presidencies, strokes, librarianships, treasurerships, and every other kind of 'ships,' kept the game alive, and matured the distinctions of sets and parties, so prevalent in and prejudicial to a college. One and all, they helped to spend time and money; flew off from their original schemes to some one more elaborate; or split into various secessions from the parent stock. Besides these common clubs, the general inhabiters of almost every college, St. Luke's could boast four others perfectly unique, and not even to be mentioned in any other college, the Recitationers, the Wide-awakes, the Fastasleeps, and the Molluscans.

In the term before Spencer's matriculation, four weak-headed Lukians, comfortably persuaded by themselves and their female cousins that they were embryo Byrons, Miltons, Coleridges, or Popes, took it into their heads to write certain short papers containing lines of various lengths, called by them 'fugitive pieces,' and to recite them to each other and such other unfortunates as could be persuaded to be victimized. In the infancy of the society, men became

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willing victims for the sake of the joke, and applauded even to the echo. At length, as time went on, the audience went off, and the society were obliged to put forth the ventral inducement of anchovy toast and coffee; by which means they obtained a decent audience, and peradventure may so do, until some 'secession' shall offer broiled bones and ale-cup as an extra bribe.

The Fastasleeps were a small, very small, and most select club, Mr. Slowman comprehending, in his own proper person, president, secretary, treasurer, and club. His bedroom was their place of meeting, his bed their council-table, his pillow their charter of incorporation. Unlimited sleep, at all times and in all places, and on the shortest possible notice, was their object; whether riding, walking, boating, eating, drinking, dressing, shaving, reading or idling, they were ever ready for duty's call. No alarum could wake them; no Wideawake disturb the serenity of their dreamless slumbers; they slept so fast, no B. flat could catch them, no scout or envious chapel-bell break through the barriers which Morpheus threw around his favourite subjects. A total absence from morning chapel and ante-meridian lectures was the practical evidence of their strict performance of their duties, whilst impositions were the records and the registries of their deeds. How different was the calm Dutch-like countenance of a Fastasleep to the restless, unsatisfied faces of their rivals the Wideawakes!

Few patent medicines have given more exercise to the ingenuity of mankind with less success than Anti-sleep-when-you-want-and-as-long-as-you-can-remedies. The pedigree of the projectors and their projects is clear from the earliest ages. 'Adam,' says one of the learned rabbis, though just at this moment I forget which, 'having been wont to sink to rest beneath the trees of Eden, with the windows of his mind towards the rising orb of day, would not, on his expulsion from bliss, permit Eve to place aught of an impediment between the earliest rays of that luminary and their eyelids, that the rising orb might call him to the labours of the field.' 'A quo,' says the learned Heavysternius in his four hundred and fiftieth note, 'plane sequitur, quod Adamus et Eva in toro radicali (vulgò dicto, stump-bedstead) dormire fuerunt soliti.' Ichondras of Miletus contrived a plane so narrow that he could not sleep on it except at full length, and of such an height and length as to insure his sliding down it in about six hours, and thereby disturbing his rest, by dipping his heels into a vase of cold water placed at the foot of this plane bed. Aristotle, the wonder of the world, the sun of the dark ages, the torment of Oxonians, always slept with his right arm out of bed, holding in his hand a brass ball, which by its fall into a brazen vessel insured a continued interruption to his slumbers. What trouble people did take to make themselves miserable in those unchristian days, when hemlock was a favourite drink for great men, and polygamy and the slave trade were fashionable! But to descend to our times. A line attached to a heavy octavo, and passed about three parts of the way down a candle, so that the former being severed by coming in contact with the flame of the latter, permits the book to seek the sleeper's head, over which it had hung suspended like the sword of Damocles, has ere now roused many a drowsy Wicklamist from his morning's nap. A long string tied to the great toe of the youngest, and suspended from the window of the dormitory, when pulled according to orders by the passing guardian of the night, has turned many a young Carthusian out of bed on a cold November morning. About a year before Spencer Middleton's matriculation, a perambulatory humourer vainly attempted to rouse the slumbering Lukians in time for morning chapel. Bang, bang, bang, went the ruthless iron, until the destruction of panels, bolts, locks and hinges, caused the death of the wandering instrument. And now that the clang of the iron no more resounds through the cloisters of St. Luke's, who is there that does not regret its absence, in spite of all its noise, and all the destruction it caused, as early and late, when he hears the voices of that ruthless band of conspirators against the peace of our sovereign lady the Queen and their neighbours the Wideawakes, he blesses them as the chaplain did the purser when he trod on his gouty toe on the deck of her Majesty's ship the Wanderer.

These Wideawakes in number are about eight, and each possessed of one dark lantern, one very loud alarum, for the peculiar benefit of himself, and the especial annoyance of his friends. Each in their turn, they are bound to wake the rest of the club at six in winter and five in summer. At the appointed hour down goes the caller's alarum, whiz, whiz, whiz, ting, tingle, tingle, rat, rattle, rattle, whurrh, whuz; out of bed jumps the wretch, lights his lantern, if winter, flies across quad, up some unfortunate staircase, which is sure to be close to his bed's head, to call some hard-sleeping victim, quietly reposing over-head. First, he bangs at the victim's oak, then having effected an entrance, he stamps on his floor, then rattles his bedroom door, kicks a chair or two over, all the time shouting out the sleeper's name at the top of his voice: at last, having awakened Mr. Tomkins or Jenkins, down the staircase he rattles on his heels to serve a similar ejectment on your opposite neighbour. Some five minutes after his departure, the called one rises, tries to light his fire, and in so doing either knocks down the fire-irons if still standing, or knocks them up if already prostrate; stumps about his room to warm himself until his fire burns up, and inflicts all the horrors, without the so-called honours, of a Wideawake, on his unfortunate sub-neighbours. Rising with the lark, they go to bed with him also, preparing soon after sunset to turn in, fully impressed with the self-satisfying idea of having achieved something, in getting up when every one else was asleep, and going to bed when every one else is just well awake; thus clearly exemplifying the truth of the Spanish proverb, 'A candle burnt at both ends has no middle.'

The origin of the Mollusc club lieth in obscurity; and, although I am not inclined to assign it to the reign of King Brute, the report-

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ed founder of Oxford, about seven years after the Trojan war, whenever that was, if it ever was, for we are told by some that the Iliad is a Christian allegory composed during the monkish ages, though Mr. Coleridge hardly believes in that view. Coleridge—how that name affects us—the family of the poet—O dear! only to think of having run from the Mollusc club, through the Iliad to Coleridge. Bishop Berkeley and tar water is nothing to it. But to return. Some say that the Mollusc club was originally merely a society for the promotion of the eating of—oysters—others say for the promotion of practical geology. *In medio tutissimus ibis*—half-and-half is best.

In the days of our youth, misfortune affects us more poignantly for the moment than when threescore of years has accustomed us to the freaks of fortune. Bitter as may be our affliction, it soon passes away. The feelings of the young seem for the moment utterly broken, whilst those of the aged appear but slightly dimmed. In the one the effect is but for a time, a short, very short time—in the other, it is until death.

Tom Davis was a man whose like we ne'er shall look upon again, addicted to but one vice, and that a little one, practising on the key-bugle. There was yet another drawback, peculiar, however, to his rooms and their inmates—no one could be quite certain that he would not, during wine or supper, find a green snake or a greener lizard reposing on his chair, or coolly walking up his leg, as Tom generally kept a box of such like creatures in his bed-room; whilst, from the carelessness of his scout, the whereabouts of one or more of his pets was not rarely very far from certain.

On the evening of the day after our hero's return from London, the Mollusc met at Davis's rooms. Gerard Hamilton, our hero, the venerable Tom, and five other Lukians, assembled at half after nine round Tom's mahogany, whereon were two barrels of Molluscs, sundry goblets of spiced ale, *cum multis aliis* viands too numerous to catalogue.

'Hamilton,' said one Joseph Perkins, a new Molluscan, taking advantage of a temporary lull in the evening's labours, 'Hamilton, what's the best way to remember those confounded dates?'

'Write them out on a sheet of paper, paste them up over your washing-stand, and digest during ablution.'

'I've tried that,' said Perkins, 'but it won't do; I've now taken to Crabbe's Memoria Technica.'

'Memoria Technica be blessed!' replied Gerard; 'it's quite as hard to remember such jaw-breakers as Romekicky or Constantinopleski, as B. C. 753, or A. D. 328. As long as the symbols remain in your head, the system works well; but as you are required first to get up a new language in numbers, then to learn a set of semi-barbaric words, and lastly to translate these hard names into plain ones, twos, and threes, the chances are about three to one in favour of the old system. When the symbol takes to vanishing, how are you one whit the better than—'

'Nora O'Connell and her paternoster?' cut in Tom Davis.

'And pray, Mr. President, what has Mrs. O'Connell and her paternoster to do with the Memoria Technica?' asked Gerard, rather huffed at being interrupted.

'Why, just this much,' replied the imperturbable Tom; 'Mistress Nora O'Connell was an old Irishwoman who superintended the worldly condition of a flock of sheep somewhere about the borders of the picturesque lake of Killarney, and who, bating her ignorance of Latin, and her very colander-like memory, was a decent respectable Roman. "Nora, my darlint," said the lady's priest, father Tim Magrath, one fine morning, after a short confab about the sheep and the weather, "I hope you say your paternoster every night and morning, Nora." "Sorra be to your riverence," replied Nora, "and sure it's I that would, but I can't 'member it." "Can't remember it, Nora? well, let me repeat it you," said Tim, and thereupon went steadily through the form, whilst Nora listened attentively, moving her head and right foot as the sentences began and ended. At last, when the priest had ended, the old lady giving him a queer look with her eye, and pulling a short black pipe out of her mouth, said, "Ah, yer riverence, I know'd it would be all that—but I can't 'member it, I can't 'member it, at all at all." "Come, Nora," said Tim, "we'll contrive a way to make you 'member it; do you see that sheep with the black face, Nora?" "O sure an' I do." "Well, Nora, that's paternoster." "An' you're paternoster are ye, the old un?" "Now," said Tim, "you see that one with his blind eye?" "O sure an' I do." "Remember that's qui es in cælis." "O sure an' I will, the ould thief." "That one with the lame leg is sanctificatur, and that dirty-faced scamp with the stump-tail's nomen tuum," and so on went Magrath, until he had parcelled out the paternoster among the flock. In Nora's case this novel Memoria Technica answered. Next year came father Magrath again. "Good morning, Nora," said the priest. "The top of the morning to your riverence." "I hope you remember your paternoster, Mistress O'Connell?" "O sure an' I do," replied Nora gaily. "Let me hear you," said Magrath; so down went Nora on her knees, and began the prayer in a language only known to her countrymen; it was something like the following: "Paartar nozeter quai haes e'en cales noomeen toooom." "Hold hard," says Magrath, "that's not right." "O sure but it is, your honour's riverence," said Nora. "No, but it aint," replied Tim angrily, "where the — where, by the piper that played before Moses, is sanctificatur?" "O plase yer honour's riverence," said Nora, "he died o' the rot last winter, so ye see I left him out."'

'I suppose, Davis, you have heard that Montgomery 's plucked,' said Hamilton, as soon as the roars of laughter with which Tom's story was received, had subsided into detached paroxysms.

'Plucked!' said Davis with a stare, 'what for?'

'Divinity,' said Hamilton, slipping a mollusc down his throat. 'They got him on Elijah, and

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that floored him. Phillips asked him a good deal about the prophet and about St. John, and then finished him by asking, why Elijah was to return again to earth? Poor Montgomery looked anything but wise, and after a few minutes' hesitation asked in a faint voice, 'was it because he left his mantle behind him?' Phillips, good-tempered as he is, could not stand this, so Montgomery became an 'implume animal.'

And now the oysters—I beg pardon, the molluscs—having been removed in one direction, and the knives, forks, and shells in another, (for be it noticed, they were their own operators,) the table was ornamented with clean glasses and tumblers, a brimming bowl of sherry punch, a plate of lemons, and other requisites for replenishing the punch, and a small box of first-rate Woodvilles, the scouts departed, the oak was sported, and the president commenced the evening.

'Molluscans,' said the venerable gentleman, rising, glass in hand, according to the rules of our society, 'I rise to propose the solitary toast—solitary, not because we would cast into the shade that memorable method of contributing to the conviviality of the evening, but because the frequent and hearty commemoration of the numerous virtues of our component parts might tend to interrupt the philosophical lucubrations of our brains, and the harmonious strains of our united voices. (Hear, hear.) Yes, Molluscans, I am here, and I hope I shall remain here some time longer. (Hurrah!) The event of an addition to our original society—the election of our new members—has impressed on me the necessity of giving some short account of the rise, progress, and nature of our association. (Hear, hear.) It cannot be unknown to us all, how the labours of a Buckland have raised our Alma Mater high among the ranks of geologists, and when I look round, can I doubt but that some of the most ardent admirers and professors of that science are assembled within the walls of this college? (Immense cheering, during which the spoons got converted into crescents, and a tumbler became bottomless.) Among the many tribes of the oceanic inhabitants whose remains, embedded within the various strata, have been brought to light and reanimated by the labours of Buckland, Sedgewick, and Agassiz, the large tribe of antediluvian pectenidæ, or molluscs, have met with comparatively little attention. A few terms ago, it occurred to some of our friends, and especially to our Vice, (hear, hear,) that by dint of a terminal combination of practical experiments on those of the molluscan family still inhabiting our waters, the habits of their ancestors and ancestresses might be deduced with some approach to accuracy, and the public and private life of that interesting and peaceful nation delineated; (cheers;) and the many theories of the duration of their animal existence, as dependent on the opening of their bivalves, at last confirmed or annihilated. (Cheers.) Under this impression, we, under the guidance of our venerable Vice, formed this association, in order that we might test the "duration of life theories" by the terminal opening of the greatest number of living specimens in the shortest possible time. (Immense cheering.) On the appointed evening at the appointed hour, the subjects are laid upon the table; before each operator is his stout triangular-pointed dissecting knife, his cloth of operation. The broiled bone gives strength, the beer-cup or the goblet affords suitable refreshment. As the subjects are opened in rapid succession, the theory is tested, as each semi-living mollusc, embalmed in the powdered Indian berry, and floating on the acid of the grape, seeks with contented mind its corporal coffin, gladdened in its heart that its short life has been devoted to the proof of so important a fact in the natural economy of the molluscan race. (Cheers indescribable.) These labours concluded, punch excites the risible muscles; bishop confirms the hilarity of the evening, ushering in the well-toned choir; the fragrant weed soothes the intensity of philosophical excitement, and mountain dew—the pure Glenlivet—superinduces that tendency to sleep so necessary after the labours of scientific research. (Cheer upon cheer.) Some say—some say—I fear to utter the words, Molluscans—some say we eat oysters. (Great excitement.) Alas! how prone are the envious to Billingsgating! Among the many societies and clubs of this college, where is there one, save this, and this alone, that has remained true to its original object? The temporary excitement of the political discussions kept the earlier meetings of the debating society tolerably respectable; now supper—ay, supper—is its end, its illegitimate conclusion. The wideawakes have degenerated into hot coffee drinkers; the "Reciters" into tea and muffins;—'

'Coffee, Mr. President,' interrupted Hamilton.

'Coffee and muffins, Mr. Vice; the Boat club sighs only for the lowest place. (No, no, yes, no, *ad libitum*). Settle it amongst yourselves, gentlemen. The archery club seeks only to miss the target, and to wear a green coat and brass buttons, (Yes and no, as before,) whilst the Mollusc alone keeps its original object steadfastly in view—the development of the physical and moral condition of the molluscan inhabitants of earth's dark waters. (Renewed cheers.) "The world's my oyster, and with my sword I'll open it."—Gentlemen, "The Mollusc;" *esto perpetua.*'

'Charge your glasses,' said Gerard Hamilton. All charged.

'Fire!' said Tom Davis. 'Hip, hip, hurrah!'

To describe the way in which 'their noble selves' was drunk by the Molluscans exceeds my humble pen. It requires the practised hand of a regular public meeting reporter to do it a tithe of justice.

'I wonder what was the origin of that hip, hip, hurra!' asked a junior member, one of the newly admitted.

'O, ask Hamilton,' was the general reply; 'if he does not know, he'll coin an account.'

'Well,' said Gerard, 'as I am referred to in such flattering terms, I must e'en disclose my knowledge—as I have read, it originated in the crusades.'

'More likely in the cider cellar,' observed Davis *sotto voice.*

'You see,' continued Gerard, 'whenever an

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address was made to any of the assembled crusaders, they used to cry out, '*Hierosolyma est perdita!*' followed it closely with a wild scream; finding, however, that that made a rather long chorus, they took the first letters, and made one word of them—H. E. P., which soon degenerated into hip, hip, hurrah!'

'Did you ever?' said Davis, opening his eyes rather wide.

'No, I never,' chorussed the club.

'What on earth is that noise?' said a long spectacled member on the immediate right of the president, as a sound of whirring, whizzing and tingling, broke on the ears of the party.

'That,' said Davis, listening for a moment, 'O, it's that confounded fellow Jones, trying his new alarum.'

'What, Jones a Wideawake?' exclaimed two or three at once.

'Yes,' replied Tom. 'He has succeeded to long Dennistown, who was a member for only two mornings. When he joined the pests, I went down with him to Salmoni's to purchase his peace-killer. Madame alone was in—a staid, sober matron. Various tormentors were inspected—this was too quiet, that too noisy, that no noise at all. 'Pray, sare,' said madame to her would-be customer, 'be you werry hard get up?' 'O, uncommon so,' replied Dennistown. 'Can you no wakee to de bell?' 'Not I. They put the college bell in my scout's cupboard, and d—n it, I never heard it once.' 'Ah, sare, how you eber get up den.' 'Just touch me, that's all,' said the intended victim. 'Ah, sare, den dis be de instrumend,' said madame, handing down a large clock, with a fungus-like appendage of chain and hooks, large iron weight, and wheel. 'How does he act?' inquired Denny. 'O, de clothes,' said madame, looking rather warmish. 'Eh? Pulls the clothes off—strips one—eh?' The old lady assented with a faint blush. 'No bad plan that, Tom,' said the dupe, turning to me as he bought the engine and ordered it up to college. On its arrival, a counsel was summoned in his bed-room, and Dennistown put to bed, the clock set right, and the hook fixed into the bed-clothes. At six A. M. down went the weight, off flew the bedding, and after them, with a curse, went Denny—unhooked the articles, and rolling himself up again, left the Wideawakes to somnus for that morning. Next time he set the clock wrong, and was lugged out of bed at three A. M., tumbled over a pitcher, broke his shins, anathematized his alarum, left the club, and sold his whole estate, right, title, remainder, and reversion in the said tormenting machine to Jones."

'A very good story,' said Hamilton, 'and very well made up; so let's have a song. Come, Davis, lead off.'

And now the glass and the song went merrily round, Davis leading with a hunting melody, his neighbour on the left taking up the sentimental line, followed by an attempt from the spectacles, a patriotic ditty from Perkins, and one or two lugubrious attempts from our hero and the rest of the club.

As midnight came on, and the punch and the bishop went off, there was a call on the amateur cook, Hamilton, to concoct another bowl So clouded was their vision by the smoke of the weeds and the glare of the candles, that neither the concoctor nor any of the drinkers discovered that, instead of wine, he had poured in brandy; which may be the more readily accounted for by the fact, that the time for discovery was only between the last drop of the old and the first glass of the new, for, after that, eyes grew dim, and spirits rose; the love-songs assumed a questionable hue; the reverend member in spectacles looked serious and went to sleep; Hamilton talked for himself and everybody else, swore every one was drunk but himself, said the punch was too weak, and thereupon emptied the brandy-bottle into the bowl, amid general acclamation; Perkins became outrageously loyal, whilst his eyes sparkled like fireflies, tried to look sentimental, gave a long and rather confused account of his lady-loves, tried to put his arm round his chair, thinking he was waltzing with his last 'dear,' toppled over, and sat very contented on the floor for the remainder of the evening. As for Spencer, over-excited in mind and body, he was at first dull, then, as the glass passed more freely, uproarious, until at last he settled down into looking most wise, and reading a confidential lecture to his neighbour on the enormity of somebody's condct, but whether his own or not was far from clear, intermixed with sundry medical hints, and rules for playing the flute. At three o'clock every one saw each other home, or thought they did, swore eternal friendship for ever and a day and all at once, and, having saluted the president with a view hilloa, persuaded themselves that they went to bed—sober.

CHAPTER VI.

The Legal Adviser.

Messrs. Malachi Perjury and Moses Fence were members of what in genteel language is called the other part of the profession—attorneys at law and solicitors in his majesty's high court of Chancery. In the palmy days of thieving, when the victims of a regular 'put up affair' were glad to compound with their victimizers, and to recover, at some twenty or thirty per cent. discount, their stock in trade or their unnegotiated bills, in nine cases out of ten the confidential referees were those honest and high-principled men, Messrs. Perjury and Fence. In the various legal transactions which passed through that office during the sitting of the Old Bailey courts, there were many in which it was absolutely requisite that witnesses should be able to recall to their minds certain minor events, such as the meeting of Jack Stubbs at the Cat and Cauliflower at three minutes after nine on a certain Saturday evening, and this with the most minute accuracy as to time. Mr. Perjury was deservedly famous for the very judicious way in which, during a short *tête-à-tête*, he could assist a witness in recalling these minute facts. Mr. Fence confined himself to the converting the unwieldy masses of wrought silver, and the pocket-books of notes, which his various clients at times found themselves suddenly possessed of, into the current coin of the realm.

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As the clock struck nine, on the morning after the old squire's sudden death, the senior partner of the above firm, having taken off his hat and gloves, sat himself down in his own peculiar snuggery, to digest the Hue and Cry, the shockings and police reports of the Times, and such letters as the post might have brought for his edification.

'Humph!' muttered Malachi, as he cast his eye over his favourite journal. 'George Welsh—burglary at Croydon—none of ours—belongs to Sneak and Cheatem. Peter Cumming—highway robbery, attempt at murder, at Dalston. Here, Mr. Scamp'—Mr Scamp, a Jewish-looking clerk, made his appearance—'O, Mr. Scamp, go down to Marylebone and see about Cumming, taken up for highway robbery.'

'Yes, sir,' replied the clerk.

'And if Pat Bullhead calls, tell Mr. Tomkins to send him to me at once.'

'Very well, sir. Mr. Charles Bully sent up last night to say he can do nothing for Gabriel Jones without an alibi.'

'Very well, Scamp, I'll look to that, indeed it's nearly ready,' said Mr. Perjury, as he turned once more to reconsider his paper.

'Hum!—ah!—burglary and murder—Kilburn—old gentleman—and servant—last night—Mr. Middleton, Mr. Middleton—what, the squire's old uncle—'

'Pat Bullhead, sir,' said Mr. Tomkins, interrupting Mr. Perjury's musing meditations.

'Well, Pat,' said Malachi, 'have you been able to remember those facts about Gabriel Jones?'

'Not a smithereen, your honour.'

'Come, sit down. Don't you remember being at the Green Dragon at half-after ten last Saturday month?' asked Perjury, with a particular emphasis on the 'don't you remember?'

'I'll be after remimbering that.'

'Have you any particular reason for remembering it?'

'Not by no means, your honour.'

'Think—hadn't you a new waistcoat on that evening?'

'Sorra a bit, your honour; the vestcit be as ould as St. Patrick.'

'Think!' replied Perjury, and adding, as he handed a couple of guineas to his companion, 'when you buy yourself a new waistcoat, it will bring back the one you then had to your recollection.'

'I'll be after remimbering that same vestcit.'

'Don't you remember,' said the attorney, with his peculiar look—'don't you remember seeing Gabriel Jones sitting there at that time, and your looking at the clock, and being astonished at his being so far from Hamborough at that time of night?'

Pat shook his head.

'Don't you remember?' said Malachi, unfolding a five pound note.

Again the head was shaken.

'Don't you remember?' asked Perjury again, eyeing his man intently, as he proceeded to drop a couple of guineas into the note.

Again the head was shaken.

'Don't you remember?' asked the attorney, for the third time, as he quietly shook the two guineas out of the note, and, adding another piece of like paper, carefully folded them up, pushed them across the table, and, turning his back on his friend, proceeded to demolish a hard-headed coal.

'I'll be after remembering that,' said Bullhead, pocketing the notes.

'Very well, Patrick, I'll take a note of your evidence. Let's see. It comes on, on Saturday next, at ten. I'll let you have a memorandum of what you have now told me the night before—it's useful sometimes.'

As the alibi bowed and left the room, Mark Redmond, pushing the officious Mr. Tomkins out of the way, hurried into the sanctum.

'Morning, Mr. Perjury,' said Mark.

'Ah—how d'ye do, Mr. Redmond?—glad to see you—what's on hand now?' replied the attorney, looking over his shoulder.

'In the first place,' said Mark, handing him a paper, 'vill that bond do?—is it legal?'

'It's only a copy,' said Perjury.

'Of course, of course; do you think I'd a trusted the real thing in your clutches, Mister Malachi,' sneered Redmond.

'O, very well,' replied Perjury, pretending not to hear the concluding part of the answer. 'The deed's well enough—love and affection—services to self and uncle—hum—hum—two thousand per annum—yes, it 'll do.'

'Now, then, for the squire's affairs.'

The attorney turned round, set himself down at his desk, and became attention itself.

'You see, Malachi,' continued Redmond, 'the old 'un's dead.'

'Yes, murdered.'

'That's neither here nor there; he's dead, and what's more, he ha'n't left no vill.'

'No will—no will!' exclaimed the little yellow descendant of Abram. 'Why, it's only yesterday that Mouldy's clerk told me he had taken the will up to the old gentleman, and witnessed his signature.'

'Wery likely,' said Mark, 'but it aint now to be found—at least so I heard—you see the house was a broke into, and so I 'spose the will went among the other traps.'

'Could not that will be found?' inquired Perjury.

'Oh, it's burnt by this time, I dare say.'

'It is not burnt,' said Perjury in a decided tone, that made Mark wince. 'It is not burnt, and I recommend the man that has it not to burn it.'

'That's nothing to me,' said Mark doggedly.

'Nothing?' replied Malachi. 'Nothing; only twenty thousand a year is worth a lot of money down—and would pay better than any annuity.'

'Can't be helped now the will's burnt—all that's nothing to me.'

'Oh, nothing whatever. By-the-bye, a court of equity would make that bond of yours look queer, Mr. Redmond.'

'There's time enough for that,' replied Mark nervously.

'O, of course—I only threw out the hint in case any friend of yours might ever come to know anything about that will.'

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'Vell, vell,' said Mark, 'that von't do now, not at all; the squire's all right, and you must do vhat's vanted in getting things in order.'

'Perhaps they'll object to his title,' suggested the attorney.

'Title; what title, aint he the squire?'

'His birth—his identity—that he's the right man; can he prove he's the son of the late squire's elder brother?'

'Proof,' said Mark, 'lots of proof; Tom Phillips, the gamekeeper at Riverley, know'd him from his birth, till he run away with Bill Sykes, the poacher, to London; then Bill's brother Jerry know'd him as the Fresh'un in Perkins' gang; then Tom Wells remembers him as the cracksman in the moonlight crew; and then I take him up from that ere, to this ere time.'

'Very nice proof, indeed, Mr. Redmond,' said the attorney with a sneer, 'exceedingly good, a gamekeeper—a poacher—a smuggler—a burglar—and a ——.'

'Gentleman, if you please, Mr. Perjury,' said Mark, interrupting him in his catalogue—'a gentleman from this ere time.'

'Well, Mr. Redmond, I believe, I have a note of the whole business, it shall be seen to directly; tell the squire he may depend upon my immediate attention, and I hope in about a week or ten days to salute him as Lord of River Hill.'

'Good morning, Mr. Perjury.'

'Good morning, Mr. Mark Redmond,' said the attorney, as with a bow and a scrape the worthy pair separated; a pair, to which no third could be found in heaven above nor in earth below, not more accurately to particularize the locality of the amiable person who is alone entitled to sit bodkin to our friends.

'Yes, Mr. Mark Redmond,' muttered Malachi to himself, when his visitor was well gone—'yes, that will is not burnt. You stole it, and you've got it—saw it directly. Well, on second thoughts it's best as it is—let the young squire get well in and just taste the pleasures of his estate, then set him up to refusing to pay Mr. Redmond's annuity; that makes a breeze, out comes the will, and either the squire comes down handsomely, or else the parson pays; the squire needn't come to me. No, Redmond dare not go elsewhere—humph, come what will, I dare say we shall not be very great losers.' And Perjury, having thus settled the matter to his own satisfaction, sat down to write a polite lawyer's letter to our hero's father, inquiring after the existence of any will, and politely insinuating the claims of the next heir in default of any legal devise.

As the other member of the pair returned to the old haunt in Westminster to report progress to the squire, who was unable to stir from the inflammation of his arm, along which the bullet by which Samson died had grooved a deep channel, he held similar converse with himself on the present state of his affairs. 'So,' he thought hardly to himself, 'so the bond's good, and two thousand makes me a gentleman—but then, that equity, that makes me a beggar—ah, but there's the will—old lie knew I'd got it—well, if the squire don't sail smooth, out it comes, and they as pays best gets most—but then there's Mary—the squire's made a fool of her—he shall make her a lady now, or out comes the will. Well, come what will, Mark won't be a very great loser anyhow.' And thus having reasoned out the way, he prepared to make his first essay on the squire.

The bullet which sped to the death of the faithful servant, had furrowed its track along the arm of the young squire, tearing away the thick velveteen jacket in its way, and leaving a long though hardly skin-deep mark from the elbow to the bone of the wrist.

'And shall we leave this wretched spot, dear George?' said the same careworn girl, whom we have before seen in company with the squire.

'Yes, Mary, yes, but not yet—soon, very soon'—replied George, walking impatiently along the room.

'Why not yet, dearest—you are now squire—at least brother Mark has said so.'

'Not yet, Mary—the law does not move quick, there is yet much to be done.'

'Art sure he left no will?' asked the girl.

'No, girl—no, girl,' replied George with an angry start, placing his hand on his crippled arm, as it hung in the sling.

'Morning, squire,' said Redmond, walking into the apartment.

'Ah, Mark, have you seen Perjury?' replied George, tendering his left hand to his companion.

'What, left hand, squire?—that looks bad among friends, but accidents will happen—come, Mary, make yourself scarce, the squire and I have much to talk about, and I never like a third party, much less a woman, in my privy councils.'

The girl left the room.

'That was a lucky shot, squire,' said Redmond as he followed his sister and locked the door after her, 'though it did take toll on the road.'

'Yes,' muttered George.

'I wonder what killed the old 'un—it warn't the bullet?'

'Good God, no;' replied the squire.

'No, no, you didn't kill him outright, squire, you only frightened him to death, that's all,' replied Redmond with a grin.

'Peace, brute,' said George, striking his sound hand on the table.

'Thankee, thankee kindly, squire—that's mild—isn't there anything else you'd like for to be calling on me?' replied Mark tauntingly.

'No, no, Mark, I am wrong—but indeed you try me too severely.'

'Vell, vell, let's go to business. Perjury says it's all right enough, so be that you're the right man.'

'No fear of that,' replied George.

'Vell, but he vants proof; but he says he'll see to all that, and do vhat's right, and then, when we're vanted, we must show; so ye see that job is jobb'd, thanks to somebody.'

'Thank you, thank you, Redmond; but now do let us burn that will—have you got it?'

'It's quite safe, squire,' replied Redmond, 'quite safe.'

'It will be safer when burnt—think what

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damning evidence it would be against us,' said George anxiously.

'No, squire, it mustn't be burnt yet; ve'll talk more about it vhen ve're all snug at River Hill,' replied Mark, deliberately.

'We?' exclaimed George with a start.

'Ay, ve, squire—vhy, you're not agoing for to give your friends the go-by—praps you'll turn us off.'

'No, no, Redmond, of course I shall see you when I am all settled—you'll come now and then,' replied George with some hesitation.

'When all settled—now and then—that's not at all—no, no, squire, I'm a going to take up as a gemman, so I'll just get a shooting-box down about your place, and see how you get on.'

'You a gentleman!' exclaimed George with a sneer.

'Ay, squire, and many a vorse un nor me; I've two thousand reasons for it, that's more nor some has. Bating the we's, my language aint xceptionable at all; besides they say slang is fashionable; can't I patter flash nohow? vell, you needn't stare so, squire. Vhen Mary's at the Hill, it von't do for her brother to live in Duck Lane, Vestminster,' said Redmond, keeping his eye on the squire.

'Mary, Mary at the Hill!' said George.

'Mayhap you're a goin to turn her off too,' answered Redmond.

'No, no, Mark; I intend she shall have the little ivy cottage at the head of the trout stream.'

'And let her sell gingerbread and sweet cakes to the youngsters' feathers of the village.'

The squire shook his head and smiled.

'But, squire,' said Redmond, 'von't it look rather queer, if the he squire lives up at the Hill, and the she squire lives down in Early Bottom Mead?'

George shook his head.

'Vell, squire, you knows best; but hang me if I ever heard of the Lady of River Hill living in the ivy cottage afore now.'

'The Lady of River Hill!' exclaimed George.

'Vell, I suppose your vife would be that same thing,' said Mark deliberately.'

'Certainly, but what has that to do with the matter?'

'O, nothing whatever, only I 'spose Mary'll be your vife,' replied Redmond, dropping his words out one by one, and scowling from under his bushy eyebrows at his companion.

'Mary, Mary my wife! do you think I would marry my mistress?' exclaimed George, starting from his seat.

'Good vords, good vords, or as sure as I'm alive I'll brain you, if I swing for it. I say you will marry her.'

'Never,' exclaimed George, striking the table with his sound hand. 'Good God!' he muttered half audibly, 'Mark sticking to me like a leech—the Lord of River Hill mated with a courtezan.'

'Vell, squire, now that you've argufyed the matter vith yourself, what is't—a match?' asked Redmond, coolly lighting a cigar.

'Never, if I die for it,' replied the squire, as he strode angrily across the creaking boards.

'Wery vell, squire; then the parson gets the will, that's all.'

'Villain,' screamed George, 'do you remember your bond?'

'I should rather think I did than otherwise,' replied Redmond with great deliberation and coolness; 'but that, if I remember right, vas for love and affection—services to self and uncle already performed; I don't think it spoke about cribbing the vill, did it, squire?'

George returned no answer to the cold tauntings of his companion. He stood as it were entranced at the depth of wretchedness he had permitted himself to be drawn into. A miserable life, amid fortune's favours, and the smiles of an obsequious world, awaited him on the one hand; on the other were penury, starvation, perhaps an ignominious death. The golden chalice which fortune had but just presented to his thirsty lips, was now dashed away by the very hand that had borne the cup, and was not to be regained until the draught had been mixed with misery's bitterest drug. His veins seem swelled nigh to bursting; his eyeballs became unnaturally dilated; his whole frame became rigid; whilst the rapid and unceasing motion of his whitened lips told but too plainly how intense a struggle was going on within his breast. The net was drawn closely round him, the meshes were too small, the fibres too strong, to admit of even the most distant possibility of escape. Opposite to him sat his captor, cool and apparently unconcerned, and yet intently watching every movement of the squire's features, whilst his right hand played half unconsciously about the butt of a pistol which he carried in the breast of his jacket.

'You agree then, squire,' said Redmond.

'Never, never,' reiterated George; 'let Spencer, let any one, have all; I can but starve—I have done that ere now.'

'You may do something more,' replied Mark, weighing out his words during his answer. 'Somebody might go and tell one something about you and I, and that ere vill—and then you see it might accidentally happen that somebody got hanged.'

'Be it so,' said George; 'be it so, I care not.'

'Vell, vell, squire, steady a bit there, and don't go on so fast. You see the choice is either hanging or marrying—not that I make you do either von or t'other;—but honest truth, when I considers the pair of 'em, it seems wery like scull I vin, music you lose.'

'My mind is made up,' replied George, as a smile stole over his features at the philosophy of his designing friend.

'Vell, vell, squire,' said Redmond, 'we're old chums, and so I'll give you a fair chance, and a good start. I'll let out to some one that I knows vere somebody can be got at, as knows vere this vill can be found; if you like to come to your senses afore then, vhy then all's right—either I can't find somebody, or somebody can't find the vill. If you don't, vhy then I can find somebody, and somebody can find the will. Now that's vhat I call handsome.' Redmond having thus delivered his intentions, threw the end of his cigar into the fire, rose from his rickety seat, and with a ceremonious bow to the squire and a cool 'good morning,' he opened the door and pro-

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ceeded to disappear down the corkscrew staircase.

In a few hours after the robbery and the death of his brother, Spencer Middleton arrived at the cottage, and became acquainted with the events of the evening. When every requisite order had been given by him, and every preparation made for the coroner's examination into the death of the faithful servant on the ensuing day, he set himself down to write two important letters. The one which bore the superscription Mrs. S. Middleton, River Hill, we shall allow to pass unopened; from the other, which was directed to his son, our hero, we must take the liberty of making a short extract, which may assist our readers in understanding forthcoming events.

'My dear boy,' said the vicar, after entering into a very minute account of the occurrences of the preceding few hours, 'we can as yet hardly tell the actual extent of our loss, though we are well assured that money to some considerable amount was taken from the bureau—what the exact sum was, we shall never, in all probability, be able to ascertain, on account of the peculiar habits of your departed uncle. One thing, however, is too certain. The will has disappeared. Whether by accident, or with the hope of obtaining a large reward for its return, is not at present clear; though I cannot but fear, from some dark hints which my dear brother threw out during my last conversation with him, that the next heir, George's runagate son, may have instigated, if not actually planned, the robbery, in order to ensure the destruction of the will. The nurse Martha has behaved so suspiciously that I have ordered her to be carefully watched until after the inquest and shall endeavour to examine her severely during to-morrow's sitting.

'Should my fears come true, God only knows what I must do. I fear we must look forward to very straightened circumstances, as, besides the immediate loss of everything but my very small vicarage, the entire expenses of the Hill for the last two months will fall on me, inasmuch as my poor brother died some weeks before the day when he was wont to reimburse me the expenses of our large establishment. I trust you will be prepared for the worst; call in your bills, retrench every unnecessary expense, and if things come to the worst, be ready to leave at a moment's warning; do not, however, despair; until a nearer heir shall claim we are safe; and though we are bound to be prepared for the storm, we need not expose ourselves voluntarily to its merciless peltings.'

Such was the substance of the letter which our hero found on his breakfast table, about half way between morning and noon on the day after his philosophical convivium with the geologist of St. Luke's.

BONDS OF HUMAN TRUST.

BY MAJOR CALDER CAMPBELL.

A long farewell to thee, love! My hope that soared more high
Than bird, that is so weak of wing, was able to endure,
Hath met with one of those rain-clouds that through the welkin fly,
And, wet and cold, hath wisely sought a passage more secure;
Nor, though it leave the cloudy air, seeks it the earthly dust—
It may be there are better things than bonds of human trust!

A long farewell to thee, love!—Pray, never peak or pine—
There's many a river yet whose sands are rife with sunny gold;
And should thy heart to search for such hereafter e'er incline,
I warn thee try another track than that was tried of old:
Nay, never look as if I mocked—all hearts are not unjust,
But yet there *are* some better things than bonds of human trust!

A last farewell to thee, love!—'Tis true that once I sought
To have my love within thy breast all tenderly maintained;
But thou thyself of worldliness a different course hath taught;
And though, at first, that hateful task to con I was constrain'd,
Use makes it far more easy now—we *can* do what we *must*;—
—O yes! there are far better things than bonds of human trust!

Sidmouth, June, 1841.

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RECOLLECTIONS OF A STUDENT.

THE POLISH HARP-GIRL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "THE WOOD-SPIRIT."

Wenn dir was heilig ist auf dieser Welt;
Gott, Unschuld, Freiheit, Vaterland und Liebe,
O tödte mich! Dort komm ich dir entgegen
Und reiche dir den Kranz der Palme zu.
Wenn du mich liebst!—Du kannst mirs nicht verweigern,
Ich muss ja sterben!

ZRINY.

SWIFTLY as that dark horseman had departed, I met the fierce glance of his evil eye, and could read in its demon-glow the deed he had committed. It was murder, and, turning round, I beheld Zaleska drooping over her prostrate father, like a rose wreathed over a fallen oak.

The din of thousands was around me, countless throngs were gathered on every side, yet amid those multitudes the assassin's ball could reach his victim, a noble heart could die unnoticed!—Yes! they swept past and past, friends, kinsmen, all, nor heeded where the expiring warrior lay at their feet. It was the deep solitude amid a crowd, it was the selfishness of men, whose hopes are fixed on a distant object; their gaze flies on to that one point, overlooking all that should claim their care in the intermediate space.

But how was that deed consummated? What was its origin?—It is an old, old tale. Years have flowed over the hour when it took birth, and the actions of men are but as marks traced by a child on sea-sand, that wave on wave sweeps over and effaces.

May I pause in the stormy strides of the Polish revolt, to open the page of a private tale? May I stay the annals of mighty events to record the history of a human heart?—My friend, I will hope for thy indulgence. Mine is not a history—it is a romance, though a true one, and where the historian would pause to relate the querulous debates of dissentient senates, or the diplomatic intrigues of wily courtiers, that end in nullity and influence not the final event, we will employ that pause in narrating the past fates of those whose doom is fast approaching.

Turn we from the present, let us wave backward the pinions of thought through the lapse of years, let us forget and remember the *now* and the *then*.

We mark no more the thronging thousands of Warsaw, the illumined streets, the ringing bells, the press, the rush around the swift flight of that dark horseman, who sped away like a black cloud amid the whirlwind, nor the welking group beside the bleeding form of the dying noble. Away! away! A void glides over the busy peopled scene, a silence comes on the din—away! away! hundreds of miles are left behind, the barrier-marks of the omni-victor, Time, o'erstepped, and the Past stands before us. Even thus the rapid thoughts scudded before the dying man, as he recalled his life from its beginning, as swiftly in this his death hour, as we compass ages in a momentary dream.

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walls with a fain flash; one might almost deem it the first light of a sky-bounding thunderstorm.

Behind, to the east, spread apparently limitless, the dense masses of St. Petersburgh, canopied by a lurid cloud of smoke, against which play in crimson the beams of the setting sun, slanting upward from the Baltic. Dark night was gathering around the palace of the autocrat, and the sickly gleams from the streets played fitfully through its gloom, that echoed to a hoarse and distant murmur;—the darkness gathered around that point, even as the baneful influence of him dwelling within seemed to stretch away over the vast island, that extended endless and silent, a world girdled and guarded by frost and fire, an arctic and a burning zone, whilst, refreshing contrast, to the west the blue sea playing with the image of the sun, broke it into fragments, like a child a golden bauble.

On the beach stood a group of three. The one, a lofty form, buoyant, proud and fiery; the others not so lofty, mayhap not less proud, but there failed that look which ever speaks of *power* to command, that calm, unobtrusive, but ever present haughtiness. The flush of the cheek was replaced by pallor, telling of long and anxious thought; the fire of the eye was damped with the consciousness that it gazed upon a master; thus the fetters of man can curb even the highest spirit. Yet were they noble; they might have been taken for kings, were not a monarch present; but the first was Alexander, then soon to ascend the throne of all the Russias, the others Prince Adam Czartoryski and the Count Palatine of S———.

Early in youth the brothers had been sent as hostages to the court of the Empress Catharine, who had threatened otherwise to confiscate the estates of the family for its adherence to Kosciusko. Arrived in St. Petersburgh, they were treated with the greatest distinction, and became the companions of the young Czarewitch Alexander, and his brother, afterwards the devastator of Poland.

Painful was the situation of the young nobles, who, while their compatriots were fighting afar the battles of their country, were doomed to play the courtier in the halls of a despot; but even there the patriot spirit of the young Czartoryski proved true to itself, aspiring to a noble task, that of converting the scion of tyrants into the protector and champion of liberty. Holding before his royal friend the models of past and present glory, he breathed the aspirations of his own noble heart into that of Alexander, till it glowed with a fire

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ceeded to disappear, words sounded like an friend, and then the young case.

In a few hours brightening the horizon of his of his brother forward with proud hope to the fu- the high-souled child of tyrants should cottage, banner of liberty, like an Aurora in the of th

O how eagerly for a time did the young spirit of the Russian prince drink in the intoxicating draught of freedom, though but freedom in thought; how eagerly did he long for the hour when he might say, 'Poland be free!—Russia, cast away thy chains!' and the world would awaken to their clank as they fell, shouting forth pæans to the liberal autocrat. Such, in truth, were the early dreams of him, who afterwards became the scourge of Poland. Power, art thou a thing so dangerous, thus to corrupt a noble heart? Oh! could Alexander then, as he stood in youth and innocence, in form and mind well fitted to be a ruler of nations, have seen the phantasm of his after self, how would he have turned away with loathing—how would he have wept hot tears of regret and shame, as he did on his stately bed of death, when with a world at his feet, he started in agony at the visions of his memory, and as they passed, cried in his last despair, 'O my God, how atrocious was that action!'

But now how different the picture! His life was all before him, that wild, swift, strange career; and he stood a calm and melancholy youth on the beach of the blue Baltic, by his side that early friend, that noble monitor, who now, on the verge of the grave, lives a venerable and lofty exile from his own loved fatherland, bending like a pale statue over the grave of his hopes.

The hot mists rolled up from St. Petersburgh, lurid and dun, and a distant and lifelike roar came from its crowded streets, while before that high group spread the Baltic far as thought, and the heaven high as hope, seeming with their immeasurable distance to woo their spirits away. The despot's son felt the influence of the hour, and deep thoughts stirred in his then untainted breast—thoughts that drew their inspiration from the fountain of the good and glorious.

'Czartoryski!' cried Alexander, an expression of sadness stealing over his face, 'I feel that it is hopeless. The power of custom is too strong. Poland will not be free, nor Russia cast her chains away, though I were to loosen the rivets. And O, my friends, I mistrust myself; I too shall change! I feel I shall not ever withstand the allurements of power, but sink from the patriot into the tyrant. Then hear me! Let us fly, let us shun this land; contamination is in the very air; it clings around me thick and hot, like fetters; let us escape, and fly together to America; there we will live as free citizens, and at least, if we cannot others, we can liberate ourselves.'

Even Czartoryski gazed in astonishment and admiration at the young prince, who would cast away power, splendour, the mightiest sceptre of earth, for the sake of liberty. He saw, he knew, that it was the real intent of Alexander; but he knew not that it was a transitory feeling; what he deemed the highest triumph of the pure soul, was but the last gleam of the star before the clouds rush over its brightness. Though he hailed the words as an omen, he instantly felt that such a heart must not be lost to the throne. 'Thou art wanted for the happiness of millions!' he exclaimed. 'To this place thy destiny has called thee, and thy duty binds thee to the spot.'

O, how he was deceived! how Alexander himself was deceived, partially as his conscience had revealed to him the coming darkness in his heart. Did the Czar ever in after life recall that evening walk on the Baltic beach?

The night was thickening around, and through the indistinct gloom the figure of a man appeared beside the Czarewitch. The stranger had heard these words, and he came as the evil counsellor, to pervert the pure mind and sink the proud hope. To him perchance the weight of woe is owing that lies heavily on half a world. May his name escape a curse, for there are many who claim kindred to him and to the good. Thus much be said, that he belonged to a family to whose titles are appended one of dread: THE HARBINGER OF DEATH.

As he came, his evil eye fell blightingly on the Polish nobles, and for that it quailed before the calm gaze of Czartoryski, it lingered the longer on his companion, the Count of S. There was mutual hate between them, that hate which arises from innate antipathy, unknowing a cause and thence more deadly. He whispered to the Russian prince and drew him aside; what words were spoken, how far they sank into the heart of Alexander, and what reply was made, remain untold, but on the morrow a change had passed over the eastern nations.

* * * * * *

In a palace on the banks of the Neva a high meeting was held by the first persons in the state to discuss an important event.

The conduct of the Emperor Paul had been so atrocious, even for a Tatar czar, that his most charitable friends excused it on the plea of insanity; but when he gave his minister a warrant for imprisoning or banishing his wife and children, and it became apparent that his lawless tyranny was ruining the state, a party of the nobles conspired together to remove him from his throne. Whether the ultimate means formed a part of their pristine plan, or were but the result of accidental circumstances, is unknown.

At a late hour about forty conspirators broke up from a banquet, and proceeded to the palace. The emperor had been partially warned, and double guards were posted around, with orders not to permit any one to pass on any pretext whatever. Thence, when the party approached, they were denied admittance, till the guard, seeing their own commanders among the group, gave way, and the conspirators entered. The emperor having retired to rest, they proceeded up the grand staircase direct to his bedchamber. An hussar, stationed at the door, opposed their progress, but he was soon overpowered, and the nobles burst into the room, when, to their utter astonishment, they found the bed untenanted. Already fearing discovery and death, they were about to retreat in haste, when Paul, who had been aroused and alarmed by the struggle at the door, was discovered standing behind a screen.

The conspirators now declared the object of

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their intrusion, reproached the czar with his crimes, and demanded his abdication in favour of Alexander. The arraigned tyrant, palsied by terror, confessed his faults, promising amendment and strict obedience to the wishes of the conspirators if permitted to reign; but his accusers, too well aware of their fate if he retained power, would make no concession.

The emperor was already consenting; he had taken the pen, and was about to sign the paper. His accusers stood around him in breathless silence, their mission seemed successfully fulfilled; there was not a sound in the palace, no one near to disturb them, triumph gleamed from their eyes; but, more than all, one livid face glared forth from amid that fierce group with a look of demoniac malice. It was count Z., who, led away by the passion of the moment, stepped forward with bitter and insulting reproaches for the wrongs he had sustained.

Z., a favourite of the Empress Catharine, had been robbed of all the honours and emoluments she had conferred. Paul who hated him above all others, replying to his taunts with acrimony and rage, Count Z., infuriated beyond self-control, seized a chair that stood beside him, and striking the emperor on the forehead with the corner, felled him to the ground.

A dead silence ensued. This was an unforeseen event; Paul lay senseless at their feet. If he recovered they were lost, for he would never forgive, and they could not hope to escape the arm of his power. During this pause a grim figure had stepped forward—like a vulture scenting prey, he had advanced from the back-ground as the emperor fell—a ghastly smile played on his livid face. 'Ye must finish what ye have begun!' cried the Harbinger of Death, and planted his foot on the neck of the body.

At the impulse, like famishing tigers, the murderers leaped upon their victim, and actually trampled upon him till no sign of life remained. In the morning a physician was called in to certify that he had died of apoplexy.

Their measures were well taken, but they committed one oversight, without which eternal secrecy would have veiled the occurrence. In the excitement of the hour they wholly forgot the hussar stationed at the door, whom they had overpowered on their entrance. Remaining on the spot, he heard and saw all, and made his escape before the conspirators departed.

An ominous whisper stole abroad; it spread farther and farther, and though half-stifled by the bribes and menaces of the great, enough was told to ring for ever on the echoes of history. The first persons to whom the hussar imparted his tale were Prince Adam Czartoryski and Count S. A strange suspicion flashed across the minds of the latter, and they immediately sought the now mighty Alexander. It was an eventful hour. They passed through the noisy crowds, and before the battalions of the guards, with bayonets fixed, ranged before the palace. All spoke of a mighty event, such as shakes the internal state of nations. Dread doings were expected with every moment, an uneasy clamour boomed amid the mob, and the nerves of military power were strained to the utmost to fetter the unwieldy and turbulent monster. But, as the Polish nobles passed through the line of guards, and under the stately archway of the palace, they left the din behind, and a chill silence fell around them in sudden contrast. They seemed to have plunged from the surging sea of life into a cold, dread, soundless void. Men spoke not, or but in whispers; gloom sat on every brow; while the restless lightning of the eye, that met every glance with trembling, and scanned eagerly and anxiously every strange face entering the palace, told that an uncertainty of their future fate beneath the new autocrat rested heavily on the spirits of all.

A nameless dread, pervading every spot, announced the abode of death, and with step subdued Czartoryski and S. passed through the gloomy chambers. With anxious hearts they entered the presence of Alexander, anxious, not for their own weal, but for that of their country. They found him pacing the room with hasty strides; he was flushed and restless; and by his side, like his dark shadow, stood he, so justly called the Harbinger of Death.

At a glance the young noble could see the change. The Alexander of that morning was no longer the ardent youth, with whom they had conversed on stirring themes but an evening past. In an instant they felt that the wild wish he had harboured was but a momentary impulse, one of those feelings that pass through the human heart, and vanish like a bright star falling from the arch of night—the last gleam that shone on the darkness of his soul.

Alexander received the friends of his youth with a constrained and uneasy courtesy. At times, a tone of affection lingered in his voice, but it passed away like an echo of former hours. From that moment the band began to sever till it rent in twain, and persecution succeeded friendship; but the name of Czartoryski has become a wealth of history; thenceforth it ranked with the great and glorious, the nations of earth looked up to its starlike career, and when its beams set, it was ominous of a kingdom's fall, even as comets were fabled to portend of old—for with Czartoryski Poland fell.

Count S., more mistrustful of Alexander than his friend was, harboured a strange suspicion—a strange, wild, dreadful doubt, which, if verified, might have hurled a monarch from his throne. Chance had led him upon the traces of a murder, and previous events had pointed to a dark conclusion. He was the only person who had fathomed thus far, and the Harbinger, whose keen eye pierced disguise, discovered in a moment that he was possessed of the secret, by what means he knew not.

The most talented and dangerous among the conspirators, the latter had perceived the error of which they had been guilty in permitting the hussar to escape with life; an error they sought to remedy, but too late, for the Count Palatine of S., being the first to whom the secret had been revealed, had taken the hussar to the widowed empress, and placed him under her protection.

As a necessary consequence, the hatred of the parties implicated devolved upon him, the more, as the empress, foiled in her ambitious plans, now tried to raise a counter-party, and bring home the proofs of the murder. Thenceforth the new government persecuted with the most bitter enmity the originators and defenders of this hos-

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tile faction, for thus it was designated, and the direst hatred subsisted between the Palatine and the Harbinger of Death. As though sufficient cause for its bitterness were not already in existence, it was ordained that fresh fuel should be heaped upon their burning hearts,—its cause, one often told.

The Harbinger, if love could dwell in so fierce a breast, loved, and sooth to say, the daughter of a Polish serf. That any rival should baffle his love with one so humble, was a circumstance remote from all conjecture, but, as though fate impelled his headlong course to ruin, a rival stepped in the path of the Russian, and that rival was the Palatine.

Though low of birth, the Polish girl maintained the pride of her nation, and refused to listen to the impure offers of the Russian noble. Persecution following, she appealed for protection to the young count Palatine, her countryman, whom, as once the friend of Alexander, she yet deemed powerful. There needed no second appeal; and when has beauty so soft and winning pleaded in vain to the heart of man? Count S. stepped forth as her defender; and now the dreadful struggle commenced between the rising influence of the despot's favourite, and the sinking power of the friendless patriot.

While Czartoryski still remained present to protect his friend, all yet went well; but when court intrigue had procured his absence on an honourable but invidious service, the last link that restrained the tyrant broke. Then the insults and persecution of the Harbinger became more open and frequent, the power to resist them more weak. In a fated hour was it, that he and the young Palatine met in the dwelling of Theresa. Then burst forth the deadly anger, long half-suppressed,—then the last hold of the patriot on his foe was snapped asunder.

Long impunity had rendered the Russian reckless. The ends of justice had been baffled, and he sought a mask no longer.

'Thou hast learnt the secret,' he exclaimed to the Palatine—'I know it well, and yet I fear thee not. Go! tell the world it was I who murdered the emperor—go—shout it forth over Europe—and, hark! add that I confess it, nay, glory in it. Ha! ha! May I too not have the merit of a great action? How fools play with names! Does not mine sound as well as Brutus? I and Brutus! Ha! You see I can philosophise too. But mark! cross not my path in this, if you have any regard for yon girl. She is mine—hall be—or—'

And he whispered a horrid and dreadful threat. The Palatine turned pale with horror; he felt the fearful power arrayed against him; but his holiest feelings, his noblest hopes, were outraged by the being before him, and he could no longer restrain his rage.

'No more,' he thundered, 'shall the Russian boor trample on the Polish noble. What! shall I not have power to rescue a defenceless serf, born on my own estate, from the fangs of the destroyer? Is Poland your garbage? Are her hopes and her honour your sport? By Heaven! I will not be one to sanction the degradation. Back, *base offspring of a serf!* it were contamination for me to strike thee!'

In vain the young Pole provoked the Harbinger to combat; fierce and untamable, he was yet a coward, as murderers ever are; but the words sank deep—'base offspring of a serf!' it nerved him to open anger; suddenly and unawares he drew his sword—but his noble foe perceived the treacherous action. In that hour at least the Russian quailed, and when they parted, he was a cripple, maimed for life.

The ghastly look of horrid revenge with which the Harbinger left his proud and devoted foe, would have haunted the bravest heart to the last hour. '*Son of a serf!* and maimed by *that* hand! Look to thy fate, young patriot!'

Unknown to himself, the Palatine loved Theresa with a pure and devoted love, and when she sank pale and hopeless beneath that dreadful scowl, the prophetic foreboding came over his spirit, for love, though in one sense adding to the valour of man, makes him a coward for those he loves. With sorrowing heart he sought his lonely palace. The night had come, darkening heaven, as doth an evil thought the face of man—and still he stood at the casement, looking over St. Petersburgh, that spread at his feet a sea of houses, on which rode a dun vapour, while, like phosphoric lights, the pale blaze of lamps dived upward from its depth. Suddenly, a red streak flared against the sky; it welked and waved, darkened and blazed again, and then subsided in the universal gloom.

The Palatine watched the conflagration with intense interest, and, he knew not why, with deep foreboding. On the morrow it was verified. When he sought the dwelling of Theresa, he found it a blackened ruin, and its inmates gone, none knew whither. But he recognized the hand that had traced those lines of ruin and fire, and he made a public appeal to the emperor for the restitution of the abducted Theresa.

During all this time the Harbinger was confined to a couch of pain by the wound he had received. If even then his arm could grasp thus widely, and strike thus far, what might not be feared when again he roamed abroad, like a monster hungering for prey!

The appeal was thus far successful, perhaps by the very wish of the abductor, who had formed his ghastly plan of revenge, that Theresa was restored to the Palatine, on the condition that he immediately married the daughter of the serf, else were she doomed to perpetual slavery and dishonour.

The young noble hesitated not a moment, and the nuptials were celebrated with a splendour that seemed a mockery, amid the open jeers and taunts of the proud aristocracy of Russia, whilst even his own compatriots fell away from the devoted Pole; thus far can unmeaning pride influence even the best of men.

'I restore to thee the vile serf thou hast chosen for thy wedded wife,' were the words of the Harbinger, as he returned the lost Theresa, 'pure and innocent as I received her, if aught from so foul a source can be untainted. The word of my house, that never yet failed in amity or hatred, be the proof thereof; and by that word, I wish thee all prosperity that earth can bestow, UNTIL WE MEET,—*this is the curse of* ORLOFF.'

Little the Palatine heeded these words, but

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immediately after the nuptials appeared an ukase, banishing him to his estates for life, in sentence on his having committed an *unprovoked* and *cowardly* assault on a Russian noble.

This was soon followed by another, declaring his children deprived of all patrician rights, and *serfs*, as being the offspring of an unequal and ignoble union.

A latent and dreadful revenge was prepared by these specious edicts, and with a heart in which despair half-conquered love, the Palatine and his serf-bride left the bright city of the north for the castle of his illustrious ancestry.

Then but on the verge of manhood, he beheld himself baffled in every plan, every career closed against his ambition, doomed to solitude and inactivity in the first bloom of his years. Too highly connected openly to attempt his life, his enemies contented themselves with rendering him powerless in his banishment. A constant watch was maintained around his castle on the frontiers of Poland; his every action observed. He now felt a melancholy pride in adorning the ancient seat of his fathers, raising proud pile on pile, till the masses of towering grandeur rivalled the palaces of monarchs. The effigies of his ancestors seemed to scowl proud defiance against the tyrants of the land, as he surrounded himself with regal splendour in his lofty exile.

Years sped on, and whirlwinds broke around the ramparts of that ancient burgh, and passed away, and echoes rang in its grey towers, and again grew silent, as blast after blast of war scudded by, as battles raged beneath its stern walls, and anon the plains grew silent as the dew of night. Gladly, when first the French trumpet clanged across the frontier, gladly the proud noble flew to arms, and with deep sorrow re-sheathed his sword at the name of Tilsit.

Still too powerful to crush, he pined in secret, unmolested, save covertly; for as yet Alexander held specious argument with Poland, the mask still concealed the exterminating frown; but a dreadful fate was his, the proud spirit doomed to obscurity, the fiery heart to inaction.

Yet he lived unmolested, for in the commencement of his exile, Orloff, who had recovered but slowly, was, immediately after his restoration to health, sent on a long and distant mission, and when he returned, it seemed as though he had forgotten the doomed victim of his revenge.

By degrees peace again visited the heart of the young noble: the angelic beauty, the mild virtues of Theresa, won him to happiness; her smile chased away all sorrow, as the sun dispels the clouds; and even when he gazed on the young and lovely children that played around him, he forgot for the moment that they were serfs, and doomed to misery.

Thus time passed on, fulfilling the curse of Orloff '*all the happiness of earth* TILL WE MEET.'

At length, when lulled in security and peace, surrounded by the sunny smile of those he loved, and happy, for the first time happy, he had chased every care and every fear, for even the hope that the second ukase would be reversed was held out, perchance by his dreadful foe, when even Poland seemed brightening with approaching liberty, for Alexander had pronounced her wrongs 'a shame to earth,'—even then the darkest cloud came before him.

It was evening, and the Palatine, with his loved Theresa, sat on the eastern terrace of the castle. It was a lovely hour, and the air was so still, one might have heard the dew rise, when a horn sounded faintly in the distance. It neared rapidly across the country, and a plain travelling carriage drove up to the gate.

'It is our son returned from Vilno!' exclaimed the delighted mother, as with joy she anticipated seeing her darling return, proud of the honour he had reaped at that noble university, under Zan and Lelewel. He was a noble youth, fit scion of so illustrious a house—with all the pride of his race, but sensitive, as ever are the proud, and delicate even to weakness.

Eagerly the Palatine and the fond mother hastened to the hall to receive him—but he was not there! An air of consternation pervaded the household, and they ventured not to answer the anxious question of their lord.

A strange footfall was heard in a distant chamber;—thither they hastened, still thinking to see him.

A tall, stalwart figure stood in the embrasure of a window, looking across the noble park. Slowly he turned his dark face, rendered hideous by a ghastly smile—it was the Harbinger of Death!

'Ye seem happy now, Count S.,' exclaimed the monster—'and behold! what a goodly family. Methinks they are proud of bearing for serfs!' as he gazed on the joyous sons and fair sweet daughters of the house of S., 'I wish ye joy—it is the curse of Orloff!'

Slowly he paced through all the chambers of the castle, in the same calm, cold manner, while none dared hinder, for the Russian reign of terror had commenced, and then, without another word, whirled away with the clang of horns across the darkened plain.

Anxiously and long the fond parents watched for the return of their darling son from Vilno. He came not, but, in his stead, a messenger appeared, informing them that, as a serf, he had been taken from the university, to study at which he dare not aspire, and sent with the conscripts as a private soldier to the Caucasus.

In vain the Palatine and the distracted mother offered their wealth, even their life, as an equivalent for his liberty. In vain! It was the first mesh in the fearful woof of Orloff's revenge.

After a time, the latter duly—and, as he expressed it, by an uncalled-for act of kindness—informed them that their son had died of hardship and privation on the road to Asia, and that his body had been left behind to the wolf and the vulture.

Scarcely had the first blow been given, when another came. One by one, obedient to the law as applied to serfs, the high-hearted sons of that lofty house were torn away as conscripts, sent to reinforce the far Asiatic regiments of the tyrant, and one by one came the messengers, certifying their deaths amid privation and agony; and when the last—the last hope—now the only one—departed—he with the bright blue eye, the arch, sweet smile, the merry, golden laugh... In vain!—in vain! Pray not, agonized mother! Rave not, bereaved father! See! how rudely he is torn away! They beat him, because he clings to his

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home! Away! Why standest thou thus, lorn mother? He is gone!—he dies like the rest!

In vain had they striven to conceal, in vain to substitute; the eye of tyranny and revenge pierced every veil.

Two lovely daughters yet remained. O, surely they would be spared—so highborn, so gentle, so beautiful. No! the *law* must have its course—not even a Pole could murmur at that. In vain the sweet Marina loved a young and gallant Polish noble—vain were prayers and bribes against the curse of Orloff.

The sentence came. She too was doomed to be torn away, with the lowest daughters of the land, and about to be wedded to a Russian soldier—sent to a far and barbarous colony on the burning Caspian.

By a refinement of tyranny, Orloff himself appeared at this last triumph.

'The nuptials may take place at the castle of the count, that he may see his loved daughter as long as possible. Myself will be a guest; for surely the "son of a serf" may be present at the marriage of a serf,' he added in irony, with bitter allusion to the words of the Palatine in the dwelling of Theresa.

The distracted parents were forced to attend the church, which, with their ancestral monuments, was decked for the rite, and strict watch was kept over the wretched father and the maniac mother, lest some act of sudden despair should mar the ghastly revenge. But when the ceremony was completed, all cause of apprehension was deemed at an end. A sudden stupor seemed to have seized the doomed parent—he went about as one walking in sleep! He had been compelled to assign a nuptial chamber in his castle, and the drunken soldier there revelled with his helpless victim. But at dead of night a pale and frightful apparition bent over him, as though summoned by the faint shrieks of his victim-bride.

There was a deep silence—the slumbering wretch awoke not from his maudlin stupor—the eyes of the father and daughter met, and he read in them a prayer anticipating his intent. One kiss burnt its farewell on the lips of the pale girl, and a hot stream gushed against the side of the awakened soldier, as the father's sword sank into his daughter's heart.

For an instant his blade hovered over the breast of the soldier, but he withdrew it—'This sword, hallowed by her blood, must pierce none other breast but mine, and the time has not arrived!'

The Harbinger of Death departed, perhaps glutted with revenge, for Zaleska, the youngest daughter of the house of S., escaped unnoticed. The avengers left; and, wearing the dreadful curse, the father remained in his stately castle, amidst the very scenes hallowed by former ties and joys, beneath a more fearful doom than death or banishment could afford. A raving maniac, the mother lingered on, confined in a lonely tower, where often her spectral form was seen at night through the grated casement, and her shrieks were heard above the desolate plains, till men believed her some horrid fiend, howling over the devoted land.

A strange, supernatural life seemed to pervade the Palatine; he mourned not, grieved not, outwardly but from that hour he fomented the great revolt, with a success and audacity that surprised the boldest.

* * * * *

For the last time the eagle had passed the frontiers of Poland in the fulness of its glory, and repassed a flying phantom, death glooming beneath the shadow of its homeward wings.

The devastated plains were silent, for they formed the vast grave of armies; and from that hour, when broken promises and baffled hopes sank heavily on a wronged nation, the deep current of conspiracy took birth. The secret meetings were appointed and held, and an invisible thread spun between the betrayed of Poland and the oppressed of Russia. Then that celebrated conspiracy was formed in the latter country, under Pestel and Ryleyeff, based upon the grand idea of forming one vast free northern republic of independent states, to embrace the Sclavonian tribes from the Polar Sea to the Adriatic.

At this time a constant intercourse was maintained between the remotest branches of this wide-spread conspiracy, sometimes, as before mentioned, by means the most romantically strange.

A chief supporter and agent of these societies, as you are aware, was the Count Palatine, who, though banished to his estate, found means to traverse the country unobserved, and kindle the spark of liberty where all was dark and drear

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It was some time after the events above recorded. Pale evening had folded the clouds of winter around the towers of S., the night lowered gloomily, and the count was about to issue forth on a mission of fear. There was but one who accompanied him on these secret errands, an old and long-tried vassal, who claimed kindred to Theresa, and was therefore cherished. To none other was known whither he went, nor how he returned.

Though frequent had been the absence of the Palatine, he had ever been undiscovered; but latterly a party of men had been seen lurking in the neighbourhood of the castle, an unusual circumstance, for the country around had become a desert, as already it began to feel the blight of Constantine's misrule, and a large black hound had been seen circling like a haunting fiend around the walls, and scenting the track of whoever crossed their precincts.

It was already dark, and a cold mist lay upon the earth, through which at times fell slowly and lazily straggling flakes of snow, like spirits of the night-air wandering amid their dun empire. The time appointed had arrived on which the count was to depart on a secret mission of conspiracy. A sledge was brought round to a postern of the castle by that old and faithful servant, the door was re-closed, and the bell-less horses started forth on the trackless snow in silence. But at the same moment a dark mass, that had been reposing beneath the wall, started upward, like a demon out of the earth, a yell as of fierce delight rang on the spot, and the black shape glided behind the fleeting car. The Palatine and his companion were startled at the unearthly apparition. If they quickened their speed, or it was relaxed, still that strange form was close behind on their track.

'What can it be?' exclaimed the count. 'It

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is not like anything human, nor could man follow so fast. Fire! and we shall discover what it is.'

His attendant obeyed, and, by the light of the red flash, they beheld the black hound that had lurked around the castle. It bayed deep with a muttering sound, like the imprecation of some foul spirit.

The count turned deadly pale.

'Good heaven! We are discovered and pursued! On, on!'

'Shall I fire again?'

'No. It might bring our enemies down upon us at once. Hark! how that cursed hound bays, as though it were a signal. On! on.'

With frenzied speed on flew the horses; no tread announced their progress, nor hoof nor sleigh gave a sound as they whirled on over the soft snow, that now came down thick and fast. A sharp blast arose, bringing the cold with it from the north, whilst in almost palpable forms the frosty mists sailed by, like a spectral rout, rising from the dead.

On! on! away, away! Silent and swift rushed that strange flight, amid storm and darkness, so that the fantastic outlines of the vapours and the weird shape of the tracking hound alone were discernible, and that but at intervals, through the universal gloom. The cold grew keener and keener, and the deep baying of the pursuer rang clear upon the night. From time to time the count addressed words of encouragement to his companion, who gave no reply, but every time he spoke appeared to urge the panting horses to greater speed, for they more flew than ran over the vast snow-plains, along which at far intervals straggling lights dived up and disappeared, left far behind almost as soon as seen.

After a time the baying of the hound ceased altogether, and it ran steadily by the side of the sledge, its fiery eyes turned to those it bore, with a look of fierce hunger.

'See, my friend!' exclaimed the count, 'it must be a wolf; it scarce looks earthly! Haste! we must soon arrive at our place of meeting. What strange shapes the night-mist assumes! Methought, even now, there were horsemen pricking on before our sledge! But haste; the frost will kill us. How the cold gains strength!'

His companion replied not, but still they rushed on with unslackened speed; the silence was again unbroken, save by the ringing storm—and the time flew by till the count surprised at the unwonted length of their journey, addressed his attendant.

'Anselm! you must have mistaken the way! we never were thus long before.'

There came no reply.

'Anselm, awake! surely he sleeps. The track is lost, and we shall miss our friends. Answer me, Anselm.'

Still the serf replied not. The count strove to rise, but in vain—it seemed as though impalpable fetters bound him, his limbs were powerless, the spirit of the cold had breathed its powerful spell.

'Anselm!' he cried; but again there came no answer, and a dread thought smote him. With difficulty he stretched his arm towards his companion—the latter was stiff and motionless; it was but too true, the frost had done its work, the reins had been held by a corse, the dead had been his driver!

Still the sledge flew on, and turned and veered, as though a spirit rode the steeds, while powerless, scarcely able to speak, sat the doomed conspirator. He strained his gaze with frenzied eagerness to see if he could discern a human form, but an indistinct and shifting shade wrapped every object.

At length the storm parted above, and a grey light fell down from heaven! it revealed a party of grim horsemen following the sledge, two of whom had rode on before and seized the reins.

'Who are ye? whither go ye?' gasped the Palatine.

'To Siberia!' was the reply; and on whirled the race, and steed succeeding steed, as they died and flagged, rivers and hills glided past, towers and domes flitted by, morning and night sank over them, and Poland closed on the abducted exile. Away! away! till the grave of hope, Siberia, piled its walls of ice between liberty and banishment.

The party of Cossacks had been posted near the castle by the government, that had discovered the traces of a conspiracy, charged to follow the Palatine secretly, to the meeting place, and thus secure all implicated.

Assisted by the sleath-hound, lest they should lose the track in the darkness, they had followed close behind the sledge. It was then that the death of Anselm had saved that vast conspiracy, for, had he lived and guided his master to the spot, all had been discovered and lost.

When the Cossacks had found, by the exclamations of their prisoner, that Anselm was dead, and the track mistaken, pursuant to their orders, without further noticing the Palatine, they seized the reins and hurried him on to Siberia.

While the victim of tyranny was thus hastening on to a living grave, dark scenes were enacting in his once happy home.

KARL.

HUNTING SONG.

BY MILES MALLORY.

RECITATIVE.

HARK! the horn calls away,
Come the grave, come the gay,
Wake to the music that wakens the skies,
Quit the bondage of sloth, and arise!

From the east breaks the morn,
See the sunbeams adorn
The wild heath, and the mountains so high,—
Shrilly opens the stanch hound,
The steed neighs to the sound;
And the woods and the valleys reply.

Our forefathers, though rude,
Proved their greatness of blood,
By encount'ring the hart and the boar,—
Ruddy health flushed each face,
Age and youth joined the chace,
And taught woodland and forests to roar.

Hence of noble descent,
Hills and wilds we frequent,

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Where the bosom of Nature's revealed,—
Though in life's busy day,
Man of man makes a *prey*,
Still let ours be the prey of the field.

With the chace in full sight,
Gods! how great the delight,
How our mortal sensations refine,
Where is care, where is fear?
Like the winds in the rear,
And the man's lost in something divine!

Now to horse! my brave boys,
Lo! each pants for the joys
That give freedom and life to the soul:
Then at eve we'll dismount,
Toils and pleasures recount,
And renew the chace over the bowl!

CURIOSITIES OF LEGAL EXPERIENCE.

BY A SOLICITOR.

THE LONE FARM-HOUSE.

Some years ago, a solitary cabin in the west of Ireland was beset by a number of armed men at dead of night, thirsting for the blood of the unfortunate inmates. They battered in the door, and, in spite of all resistance, had dragged out the farmer to be piked or bludgeoned, when his wife, perceiving that escape was hopeless, with singular presence of mind, caught up their only child, a boy not five years old, and hid him away in the old-fashioned chimney. 'My child,' said the brave-hearted woman, 'they are murdering your father; my turn will come next, but I shall struggle with them hard, and by the turf I am now lighting look well at their faces, boy, and avenge our death hereafter.' Soon the ruffians did return, and long and gallantly did she struggle by her own hearth-stone, while from his dark hiding-place the poor child with white cheeks, did his mother's bidding, and stared silently at her murderers. Five months afterwards, three of the miscreants were convicted and hung, chiefly on the evidence of that boy. Such was the narrative with which Sir Robert Peel once powerfully excited the House of Commons, when stricter laws were demanded to keep down crime in Ireland; and yet, if the bare occurrence of such atrocities were a good reason for sterner punishment, many and many an instance might be found in civilized Protestant England. The following case occurred, no doubt some time ago, but still so recently as to be within the 'memory of the oldest inhabitant,' and therefore sufficiently connected with our own times to retain its original interest.

About thirteen miles from Shrewsbury, on the main road to Ludlow, the long straggling village of Church Stretton occupies the centre of a narrow valley, shut in by low wooded heights, through which many a winding glen leads westward through the Longmynd hills towards Bishopcastle and the Stipperstones. This part of the county is even now wild and barren, the haunt of grouse, and snipe, and screaming plover; but still some fields have been enclosed, and sundry farms marked off where, fifty years ago, all was soft marsh or green heather. Far in the centre of the waste, at least three miles from any villlage, there stood, at the time we speak of, a lone farm-house, completely shut in by three round grassy hills, between two of which a cart-track led out to the high road, while between another pair a little brook trickled and trickled by, on its way to the distant Severn. In the hollow and on the hill-side were patches of barley and oats, and a few roods of potatoes; but all the rest was a bare mountain sheep-walk, without a tree or a corn-field to vary the monotony of grass. It was a desolate spot in winter, when the swoln stream rushed hoarsely down the glen, and fierce blasts came raging and howling through one or other of the hollows;—nor would every woman have borne the savage solitude with the courage and indifference displayed by the good wife of Longhope Farm.

She was, indeed, no ordinary character. Her father had occupied a few acres of land at Pilverbatch, a small village about four miles from Longhope, but for several years before his death he had been a complete cripple, unable to labour, and supported solely by the vigorous activity of his daughter Rebecca. She managed everything herself—ploughed, dug, hoed, and made hay in turn; bought and sold to the best advantage; kept the house in order, and husbanded their slender resources with the utmost economy. When the old man died, and the necessity for such constant exertion no longer existed, she listened to John Morgan's proposal that they should marry, make a joint-stock of their little properties, and try to earn an honest livelihood out of one of the mountain farms. Accordingly, the marriage took place, and a lease of Longhope was obtained on favourable terms.

Three years had elapsed, and the farmer was now a thriving man, owing in a great degree to the good sense and activity of his helpmate. For some time she had done all the household work unassisted, until the birth of a child, in the second year of the marriage, obliged her to engage the services of a young girl from Pilverbatch, named Jesse Williams. In winter, two or three labourers and shepherds were generally lodged about the farm, but in summer time it often happened that, for days together, there was no one at Longhope except the good wife, her child, and the maid. Both Morgan and his wife, from living so near the border, were half Welsh people, and both were kind-hearted and hospitable whenever opportunity offered.

Little Jesse, on her first arrival, had been quite dismayed by the loneliness and solitude; but habit and active employment, together with occasional visits from a village sweetheart, soon reconciled her to the change. If must be confessed that her admirer, young Harry Watkins, was by no means above the ordinary race of mortals, for he was slouching and lumpish in his appearance, a thought passionate, and as obstinate as a Kerry pig. On the other hand he was

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a hard working lad, who supported both himself and his aged parent; and he had somehow managed not only to settle in his own mind that Jesse should be his wife some time or other, but also to impress the same notion upon her, she scarcely knew how. It was therefore almost a matter of course, on every fine Sunday afternoon, for Watkins, in his bright red waistcoat, and Jesse, in her blue cotton gown and gipsy bonnet, to roam 'over the hills and far away,' or else to stand side by side in the aisle of one of the neighbouring churches.

But 'the course of true love never does run smooth.' Even in the solitude of Longhope, a rival intervened to disturb Harry Watkins's calm security. On various occasions Jesse had been sent to Church Stretton, to procure household articles or woman's gear for dame Morgan, and, being a pretty, fresh-coloured lass, she had attracted the notice of Joe Garbett, or larking Joe, as he was called, who was not long in making her acquaintance. In truth, Joe was by no means bashful, nor afflicted with doubts as to his personal merit. He was a slight active fellow, with light brown hair and grey eyes, the left being half closed from a confirmed habit of winking. There was a knowing, jaunty air about him, which made him pass among the clodhoppers for 'main clever,' a character which he laudably endeavoured to maintain by constantly taking them in. Numberless were the pints of beer he drank at their expense, by means of tricky wagers, or skilful doses of flattery; yet Joe was always a welcome guest at the taproom of the Talbot or Buck's Head, where his songs or ready-witted jests gave life and animation to the circle of heavy-headed beer-drinkers. The old farmers, indeed, shook their heads, and prophesied that he would come to no good; but among the 'lads of the village,' and we may add, the lasses too, Joe was a universal favourite. He soon managed to establish himself in Jesse's good graces, who was greatly flattered by such a conquest; indeed he might almost be considered as her first lover, for her old sweetheart she had known from a child, and the change from a playfellow to a lover had been scarcely perceptible. Garbett, too, was so much more insinuating and attentive, constantly walking part of the way back with her, carrying her basket, and chatting with a gaiety which contrasted strongly with Harry Watkins's matter-of-fact conversation. He took great care, however, not to come near the farm, and there was so little intercourse between Longhope and the neighbourhood, that Jesse's new lover might have remained unknown for a long time; if she herself had not given mysterious hints on the subject to Watkins. It was some time before he comprehended her, and when he did, his behaviour was so outrageous, and he treated Jesse so much like a criminal for daring to have another admirer, that her spirit rose against it, and she declared her determination not to be scolded by him any more;—he need never come after her again, she added, for Joe Garbett was a hundred times kinder and handsomer; and away she bounced like a Welch poney from a stranger that tries to catch him, leaving Watkins dumb from sheer amazement, his face rivalling in colour the scarlet waistcoat below.

The result was, that Harry Watkins, on the very next Sunday, went to Longhope, and told dame Morgan his grievances. The good dame, knowing him to be a steady, respectable lad, and having heard that Garbett was the very reverse, spoke seriously to Jesse, and even insisted on her giving up her new acquaintance altogether. But her interference only made the damsel more obstinate than before, and more resolved both to be 'off with the old love' and to be 'on with the new.' She was obliged, however, in future, to meet larking Joe secretly, and that worthy himself took especial care not to be seen in the neighbourhood. Thus matters remained until the twenty-second of August, 17——, a day to be marked blood-red in the calendar of fate, so pregnant was it with death and anguish to the inhabitants of Longhope Farm.

It was the week of Ludlow fair, and farmer Morgan had attended, as usual, both to sell his sheep and wool, and to buy fresh stock for the winter feed. The sheep sold well, but winter stock being in great demand, the farmer determined not to buy at the fair, but to try his luck at Bishopcastle, where there was to be a cattle sale on Saturday; so, tying up his money, a good deal of which was in guineas and silver, in a canvass bag, he mounted his nag and made for Longhope. A ride of sixteen miles brought him to Church Stretton, where he drew up at the Buck's Head for an hour, to enjoy a pipe and tankard in the crowded taproom. Larking Joe, as usual, was one of the party, and though the farmer knew nothing of the affair between him and Jesse, he had the natural contempt for him that a hard-working man is sure to feel towards an idle scapegrace, nor could all Joe's songs and jests attract his attention. But Garbett himself was not so indifferent. The quick-witted fellow had caught the heavy sound of the money-bag in the farmer's great-coat as he threw it off, and when Morgan cautiously transferred the treasure to his coat-pocket for greater security, Joe's eye had lighted for an instant on the bulging canvass. That mere sound, that momentary glance, was enough to raise in his evil mind the ghastly vision of a horrible crime. Unconscious of the coming doom, the farmer smoked on, and when his pipe and pot were both expended, rode stoutly away to his lone house among the hills. Far up the glen he saw the cheery blaze of his own hearth kindled, most likely for the commonest purposes, yet 'it looked like a welcoming,' and he pressed on the faster to gain that comfortable fire-side. A sturdy halloo brought out a herdsman, who took charge of his horse, and Morgan was soon installed in the chimney-corner, talking over the events of the day with his wife, while Jesse bustled about, arranging the materials for a right substantial supper.

Rebecca Morgan suited her husband exactly. Her courageous temper, persevering industry, and good management, were just such manly virtues as the stout yeoman knew how to value; he felt a respect for his helpmate, consulted her on all occasions, and availed himself of her strong good sense without a particle of jealousy, or the least dread of being hen-pecked. There was no sentiment or refinement in either, but good old English feeling was not wanting. And when their early time of rest arrived, and the

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couple stood by the bed where their child lay, soft and warm, sleeping the summer's night away, the farmer's 'God bless 'un,' and the mother's light kiss on his cheek, were truer far and, if rightly looked at, far more affecting, than if the expression of parental love had been clothed in daintier phrases;—yet the same heart that will feel little interest in the homely affection of a rough yeoman in his lone farmhouse, will soften at once beneath the graceful sorrowing adieus of the cold-hearted Mary of Scotland!

Little cared the bluff farmer for such reflections. The live-long night he snored and slept with a vigorous enjoyment of rest that knew no interruption, and when Saturday morning rose bright and clear, out he tumbled, got into his clothes, dipped his head into a bucket of water, and routed out the shepherds and herdsmen with a bustle and activity that would have astonished the farmers of our degenerate days. In less than an hour he and all his men were off across the mountains to Bishopcastle, and, as Morgan intended to drive home whatever sheep he might purchase that same day, he was not likely to return before dark. As they were leaving the farm, one of the shepherds fancied he saw a man's face looking down on them from the hill-top, but it vanished too quickly, and the bumpkin cared too little about the matter, to think it worth mentioning to his comrades.

While the men-folk were away, the good wife and Jesse were busily engaged the live-long day in brewing a cask of home-made—and hard work it was to fill the copper from the brook, ladle out the hot wort, and set it to cool in the mash-tubs. But all was done before dusk; the cooled liquor thrown back again into the boilers to remain until Monday, the mash-tubs all cleaned up and turned over on the floor, and everything set in order, to the high satisfaction both of mistress and maid. Dame Morgan had just sung her little Johnny to sleep, and, leaving him in the bed, had returned to the large room, which, like the cobbler's stall, served for kitchen, and parlour, and all, when she saw three men enter the farmyard and approach the house. She went to the door immediately, when one of the three stepped forward, and very civilly asked her to give them a bit of bread and cheese and a cup of beer, as they had lost their way among the hills.

Such claims on her hospitality had frequently occurred in that wild country, and she made no difficulty about giving the refreshment they required; but not liking that the room she had just cleaned up should be dirtied again by these strangers, she called Jesse, and bade her carry some bread and cheese and ale into a sort of open shed across the yard, where, in fine weather, the shepherds commonly took their meals.

The moment Jesse set eyes on the men, or, rather, on one of them, she started, and reddened, and cast such furtive glances at her mistress, that the latter guessed instantly that one of the men must be Joe Garbett. She felt a great inclination to pack the whole of them off without ceremony, for coming in that underhand way where they were not welcome, but, on second thoughts, she determined to wait until her husband returned, and leave him to deal with them. Jesse bustled about to hide her confusion, looked out a huge brown loaf and half a cheese, and, bidding the men follow her, she tripped gaily across the farmyard.

She had not been gone a minute before a scream roused dame Morgan's anger still more against the men who, she imagined, had been rude to her little maiden, and, brimful of wrath, she hurried to the door.

Ha! there is no romping there! Shrieking in wild terror, the blood gushing in streams through the hands that clasped her throat, Jesse was staggering out of the shed. Close at her back followed one of the men with a bloody knife, and cursing fiercely, thrice he stabbed the poor girl with all his might. The blows forced her against the shed, and the smallest man of the three, springing forward with an oath, caught up a broken ploughshare, and drove it on the victim's head with crushing violence;—she dropt, and there was no more shrieking.

'Murder!' issued unconsciously from dame Morgan's lips in a hoarse whisper—the next instant her own fearful danger flashed on her mind. To shut the door and down with the wooden bar was instinctive. What next? Alas! she could neither resist nor fly. There was not a moment to think. The mash-tub caught her eye—she flung herself down on the floor, pulled the tub over her, and had just time to coil herself round before the ruffians burst in with fierce execrations. She heard their horrible threats, the eager search made for her, the furious rage they showed when she was not to be found. All agreed that it was impossible she could have escaped, and again and again every hiding-place was ransacked except the one—nay, two of them even sat down on the tub, and reproached one another with having murdered Jesse too soon, as they wanted her to tell them the 'old 'un's' hiding-place.

There she lay close coiled, knees, elbows, and head all jammed together, not three inches from them, in fear doubtless—in mortal, agonizing fear—but still with every faculty sharpened to a painful acuteness, and not without a silent hope that the good God would yet protect her.

O heart of proof, stand firm! She heard one of the ruffians start up, and declare that he could soon find out where she was. Then there was a cry—the cry of her little Johnny—the mother's heart sprang to her lips, for she had not thought of danger to him.

'Ay, burn the kitten,' said one, with a mocking laugh, 'and the old cat will soon come out.'

'Well done, Joe,' replied another, 'clap his toes to the bars.'

Mercy! mercy! they are torturing her child! His shrill screams of pain ring in her ears—there is a hissing sound as of burning flesh—oh! she cannot bear it—the devilish practice will succeed—the tub rises—no, it falls again, and the miscreants have not seen it move.

'I can't save him, I can't save him,' muttered the strong-hearted woman to herself with maniac rapidity. She gnawed her arm to the bone, but felt it not, for she dared not stop her ears, and the piercing cries of her child thrilled through her brain with a bitter agony that mocked all other pain. Scream after scream continued, she knew not how long, and still, with resolute courage, she lay silent and motionless as the dead, baffling the hellish scheme of those bloody

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murderers. At length they too wearied of the poor infant's cries.

'Stop the reptile's squalling, Joe,' said one, surlily;—the next instant there was a dull heavy sound, as of something soft swung against the wall, and the cries immediately ceased. Then the mother knew that her little boy was dead.

The ruffians must have proceeded to search the house for plunder, since the next thing the miserable woman remembered was the rattling of money over her head. They had actually chosen the bottom of the mash-tub as the place on which to divide their booty, and talk over their future plans! After counting out to each other the price of blood, which was, after all, an inconsiderable sum, they spoke of her own unaccountable escape, and the danger there was that she might be able to recognize them. All agreed that they must quit that part of the country, but it was at last arranged that, before they went, they would, on the following Sunday night, break into the house of a Mr. Harper, near Longden, which had been marked by the gang for plunder on account of the quantity of plate it was known to contain. And then, with brutal oaths and grumblings at their scanty booty, the miscreants went away, not dreaming that a just Providence had posted in the very scene of their crimes a living witness to work out the destined retribution.

In about an hour afterwards, when it was almost dark, the farmer and his men came down the glen, driving a large flock of sheep before them. But this time no cheerful blaze greeted Morgan's return. He rode a short distance ahead, and was surprised to see the yard gate open. The silence, too, was unusual; and when he found the door of his house ajar, and no light within, he dismounted hastily, and entered in some apprehension. No one was there; he called out 'Becky!' 'Jesse!' but they came not. Dreadfully alarmed, he rushed to the smouldering fire, thrust in some sticks, and stirred it into a blaze. The quivering light fell strongly on a white bundle at his feet, streaked with red. He lifted it up—good Heavens! it is the bloody corpse of a child! His shout of horror brought in the shepherds, and all stood gazing in dull consternation, when, to their infinite terror, a mash-tub which lay on the floor slowly rose up, and the form of a woman gradually uncoiled itself into a kneeling posture, like one rising from the grave. The face was deadly pale, and the open eyes stared vacantly upon them. At this fearful apparition, the men shrank back in superstitious dread, and even the stout farmer quailed. 'Becky!" at last he uttered in a doubtful tone. She nodded. 'Becky!' he said again, more confidently. She stretched out her arms, and Morgan, recovering his self-possession, caught her up like a feather, and vehemently demanded his child. The rough embrace roused her from the trance into which she had fallen—'Johnny is dead!' she said, piteously wringing her hands—'Johnny is dead!'—and that was all she would answer.

'Search the place!' shouted the farmer furiously, 'there has been murder here!'

And while the men, with lighted sticks, and with what weapons they could find, hurried through the house and outbuildings, again Morgan questioned his wife as to what had happened. But it was in vain; and, carrying her to a seat by the fire, he was about to join the men in their search, when all at once she burst into a loud laugh which froze his very life-blood.

'They burned him—ha! ha! ha!' she yelled frantically—'they burned Johnny till he screamed so,'—and she imitated the poor child's cries with strange exactness, ending in a fit of violent convulsions. It took four strong men to hold her down while it lasted, but afterwards she was so weak that Morgan carried her to bed without any opposition, and she lay quiet enough, muttering to herself incoherently.

The men had brought in Jesse's dead body, and as it was quite clear that murder had been committed, one of the shepherds set off on horseback for Church Stretton, to obtain assistance. The people there were almost all in bed, but as he rode through the village hallooing 'Murder!' at the top of his voice, every one rushed out to learn the news.

Within half an hour, all the men in the place had started for Longhope, and a rigorous examination was made, both on the farm itself and over the neighbouring hills; but nothing was discovered, and the only chance was, that dame Morgan might be able to give some clue to the mystery. The village surgeon had already bled her, and administered a strong opiate, so that nothing could well be learned from her before the morning. Meantime, the rumour of what had happened spread far and wide, and, during the forenoon of Sunday, people kept pouring in from all the neighbouring villages in crowds. Among the foremost was Harry Watkins, to whom poor Jesse's fate seemed almost incredible. He shed a few natural tears on first seeing her dead body, but the sight of her gaping wounds roused his dogged temper, and all other feelings were absorbed in the one burning thirst for vengeance. As yet, however, no one could point out the murderer, and he stalked moodily about, with flushed face and set teeth, glaring without reply to any one who spoke to him.

At last it was buzzed about that dame Morgan had awoke quite sensible, and that the constable was taking her depositions; upon which Watkins forced his way up to the bed-room door, where his well-known connection with the murdered girl procured him admittance. There were only four others present, consisting of the farmer, the constable, and his assistants, to whom dame Morgan, propped up in the bed with pillows, was faintly telling her tale of horror.

'I could not save him, John, indeed I could not,' she said, in a deprecating tone, as she spoke of their tortured child; and, in spite of her husband's kind assurances and hearty commendations, she looked up in his face again and again, repeating the same pathetic appeal, 'Indeed and indeed I could not save him!'

The intelligence she gave showed clearly that Joe Garbett had been one of the three men. Above all, the intended robbery at Longden was of the last importance, and the constable, enjoining on all present the utmost secrecy, hurried off to make arrangements for capturing the villains that very night at Mr. Harper's. The crowd of idlers without, unable to gather any information from the man of office, closed round Harry

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Watkins with eager inquiries; but he only shoved them surlily aside, without noticing their questions, and strode away over the hills at a desperate pace. Meantime preparations were made, with the utmost caution, for seizing the three desperadoes. Mr. Harper was warned of the intended robbery; one by one, the constables of Church Stretton and Longhope, with four assistants, dropped quietly into his house; Morgan, too, would be present, in spite of all remonstrance; the family were directed to go to church as usual, and when the bell ceased tolling, three of the men hid themselves in the front parlour, and the remaining three, with Morgan, in the drawing-room at the back. The house stood by itself, having pleasure-grounds both in front and rear, and stables and other offices at each side. Half an hour had scarcely passed before a pane of glass cracked in the drawing-room windows; one, two, three men were heard jumping in, and out burst the farmer on the foremost, with a huge oak stick in both hands, one blow of which beat the ruffian down in an instant. A second was also secured without difficulty, and Joe Garbett, the third, was seized by the collar at the same instant by the constable of Stretton and his assistant. But that alert villain threw off his coat in a twinkling, and sprang at one bound through the open window. The constable drew a pistol and blazed after him, then threw himself out headlong, closely followed by the three men from the parlour. But the fugitive was lithe of limb as a greyhound;—life, dear life, hung on his speed, and he would probably have got clear off but for an unexpected aid. A man jumped from the shrubbery right in Garbett's path, dealt him a dreadful cut with a broad axe which almost shivered his cheek off, and brought him heavily to the ground. Again the axe was raised in both hands, and down it came with full swing, not on Joe's head indeed, but so close that it grazed his left ear. Before a third blow could be struck, the pursuers came up, and found their new ally was young Harry Watkins. He was perfectly mad with rage, and they had great difficulty in wrenching away the axe, and preventing him from finishing Jesse's murderer at once. As soon as Garbett recovered his senses, the three miscreants were handcuffed, and carried off to Shrewsbury gaol, there to await their trial.

The sensation created in the neighbourhood by a crime so atrocious was intense, and nothing perhaps in the whole business excited greater horror than Joe Garbett's cold-blooded murder of poor Jesse, whose sweetheart he had professed himself. People asked each other if it was possible that Joe, larking Joe, whose songs and jests they had so often laughed at, could be guilty of such unheard-of cruelties. But in truth there was nothing wonderful in it; his native wit and high animal spirits concealed a character of selfish hardness, a mind utterly callous to all human sympathies. The very habit of jesting on every one and every thing, both indicated the man's heartlessness and tended to increase it. Still there was undoubtedly an apparent contrast between his pot-house levity of manner and his actual atrocities at Longhope, which deepened the general feeling of abhorrence against him. When the trial took place, and the jury, without leaving the box, returned a verdict of guilty, a loud cheer rang through the court, though promptly and sternly rebuked by the presiding judge; and as the miserable men were carried back to gaol, the mob followed with curses both loud and deep, the women, especially, loading Garbett with expressions of utter loathing and detestation.

At that period the law gave to convicted murderers but short shrift between sentence and execution, little more, in fact, than was necessary to set up a gallows. An immense crowd attended on the morning of the execution, and when the three prisoners appeared on the platform for the last time in this world, they were received with a mingled yell of exultation and abhorrence. It was the only thing that seemed to affect the wretched Garbett—that universal expression of bitter detestation by his fellow-men. Hardened as he was to all other considerations, the village favourite yet felt acutely, even at that fearful moment, the loss of his little world's applause.

The hangman's office was soon done—the white caps drawn down, the rope adjusted; the sheriff dropped his handkerchief as a signal, the bolts were drawn, the platform fell, and in a few minutes three lifeless carcasses swung in the breeze. This was all that remained of the murderers of Longhope Farm.

MEMORIES OF GIBRALTAR.

No. IV.

A WELL appointed man-of-war's barge, with its green silk awning flaunting in a light breeze, was lying off the New Mole; near it a small cutter, quivering its loosely-reefed sails, sat like a bird upon the water, as if ready to shake out its wings and flit before the wind. It was a lovely morning. Nature seemed joyously to sympathize with the gay party for whom those boats were prepared, and who had predestined this to be a *day of pleasure*. The picnics of the garrison at that period were amongst the most charming diversions, and this one had been arranged upon an unusually liberal scale.

A party of twenty were to occupy the barge, in which I would have willingly taken my seat, but as my liege lord piqued himself upon the management and beauty of his cutter, it would have offended him keenly had I evinced the least disposition to abandon his favourite. We were not, however, condemned to a conjugal *tête-à-tête*, Major Cameron having undertaken to share the captain's nautical labours, and fat fubsy poet-astering Lieutenant Sylvester having petitioned me to receive under my *matronly* protection Miss Henwood, a young lady with whom he sentimentalized—a request in which of course his own admission was implied, and to which he was probably beguiled by the mistaken hope that our small circle would afford more unbroken opportunities for his love-making than could be indulged in the larger boat.

Perhaps there are few of the minor events in life so trying to human patience as the tests presented upon the morning of an excursion; early rising, *contretemps* of the toilette, late arrivals,

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waiting, scoldings, apologies, forgets, disappointments, etcetera, generally commence the day in squalls; but upon this one occasion every one was punctual, and, to judge from the general hilarity, the laundress and *coiffreuse*, those great arbiters of domestic peace, had performed their duties to perfection—in short, everything appeared quite *au couleur de rose*.

The veteran excursionist well knows that the arrangement of a boating-party is an undertaking worthy the talent of the most able tactician. The *vis-à-vis* are delicate considerations, and the proximities require the most dexterous management. However, Lieutenant Macdonald, of the San Juan seventy-four, who commanded the boat's crew, undertook in his sailor off-hand way to dispose of those matters, and executed his self-imposed task *à merveille*.

It was intended that we should rendezvous at Algeziras, and soon running across the bay we passed close to Green Island, an islet lying near the coast, remarkable as having been the spot where the Spanish conspirators met to concert the surrender of their country into the hands of the Moors. Previous to the descent of the French troops in 1812, it had been garrisoned by a small detachment of British soldiers, but those had long been withdrawn. It is a very wretched spot, containing an ill-cultivated plot of ground, and a few miserable huts, tenanted by families in a state of the most squalid indigence.

Algeziras, for a Spanish town, is well built. The thickly-planted Alameida was ornamented by a very handsome stone fountain, which being destroyed by the French, was afterwards rebuilt in wood, the inhabitants having suffered so much by plunder that they were unable to afford the expense of restoring it to its original state. The convent was tenanted by a very limited sisterhood. The church is a remarkably fine one, and much more grand as well as ornate than that at Gibraltar. The handsome white aqueduct which rises behind the town forms a pleasing object when seen from the bay; it stands out in bold relief from the vineyards that surround it, and may be distinctly seen from any elevated station on the rock, even without the aid of a glass. Algeziras owes a greater notoriety to the numerous little white wooden crosses nailed up in the streets, as well as fixed on the hillocks, exterior to the town, each commemorative of assassination, a crime, it is believed, more common in Algeziras than in any other town in the Spanish dominions, a man's life after nightfall not being worth more than a couple of dollars' purchase. But whilst deprecating this frightful turpitude, I must not omit to mention that during my residence in Spain I do not remember to have heard of a single instance where a *woman* was the victim; and while we condemn the foreign criminal who dips his stiletto in blood, let us not forget the revolting details with which our journals abound. The Spaniard sins ignorantly, believing that his priest can grant him absolution; the Englishman has not even this excuse, knowing that for him his church provides no such comfortable consolation.

It was our intention to visit a vineyard in the rear of the town, cultivated by an old man and his pretty daughter, the latter a sufficient inducement to our youngsters, although they declared that the grapes were sour. So, after our commodore had superintended the hauling up of the barge, and the captain had secured our lighter boat, we sallied forth to the vineyard, not, however, until the crews were strictly enjoined not to make too much love to the wine or to the women, or, as Lord Grizzle pungently expresses it, not to 'kick up a row.'

It is now so well known that vineyards bear about as much resemblance to our preconceived ideas as does rustic reality to Arcadian pictures, that it is quite unnecessary for me to dilate upon the subject; nevertheless there are commonly in those of Andalusia one or more trellissed walks, hedged with roses and geraniums, that are most luxuriously cool and refreshing; and in one of those spots our location being determined, our party was about to separate into little exploratory groups,—Mrs. M. was composing her features into the most becoming smiles,—Miss S. her figure into the most pictorial attitudes,—Captain Newcome was coaxing his moustache into hyperian curls, and Colonel Mac whispering the prettiest no-meanings to the literal Miss Swallow, when a clamorous party arrived from the hotel, headed by the host himself, armed with his bill, to complain that our marauding tars had carried off *vi et armis* all his store of German sausages, and that the sailors were incontinently devouring those delicacies, seasoned by sundry condemnatory ejaculations not fit for ears polite, and by which they exhibited a very marked preference for the salt junk that composed their daily rations. The cause of this confusion arose from an error of the coxswain, who having stormed the larder of the hotel for provisions for his men, and seeing the sausages, had, in his ignorance of epicurean luxuries, believed them to be merely salt beef in another form, and only preferable in being ready dressed; these, therefore, with a skin of white wine, contemptuously denominated 'black strap,' they had grumblingly consumed, utterly unconscious of the costliness of their banquet. Money, however, the great panacea for all such evils, soon converted the landlord's anger into obsequiousness, and though the blunder cost us a little too dear, we laughed away our chagrin, and consoled ourselves that the mishap was so easily remedied.

Preserving our good-humour, we passed an hour very charmingly among the rose-fields and vines, when our propriety was again frightened away by a 'hue and cry,' raised by two sailors, who came running to inform their commander that a couple of their messmates had disappeared, and could not be heard of in the town. This was a circumstance that clouded the brows of all our beaux, but gloomiest it lay upon that of our master of the ceremonies, who felt his honour in some way compromised by the loss of his men; and scarcely had we recovered from this disagreeable intelligence, when a rumour reached us that the crew of the barge were at high quarrel with the Spanish boatmen; knives were out, and British blood was hot: the aspect of the day had changed, and now all was alarm and apprehension, where so lately every face wore smiles. A hasty council determined that we should adjourn to some less populous *locale*, where those fiery tars might find fewer enemies to cope withal; and as it was judged by the officers that a heavy pull of a few miles might act as a sedative upon their excited nerves, we agreed to steer for the rivers, where

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the rural tastes of the ladies, and that of the gentlemen for angling might be indulged, without any danger to the biped population.

The barge was soon in deep water, and amidst the open threats of the Spaniards, and the muttered imprecations of the English sailors, our party gladly pushed from shore, whence the little cutter, containing our more independent group, had already scudded before the favouring breeze.

As we cleared the harbour, and felt ourselves freed from the danger which our men had so incautiously evoked, the thermometer of our gaiety ascended, and merry signals passed from boat to boat, whilst laughing voices rang upon the gale.

Whilst nearing the head of the bay, we passed a boat of persons from the garrison, who, like ourselves, were out upon a party of pleasure; but as their course seemed towards Orange Grove, near Campo, we merely exchanged passing courtesies.

Upon entering the river we were challenged by the Spanish sentinel, who lazily perambulated the bank, and informed us that he had orders to prevent the entrance of boats; as the captain, however, was constantly in the habit of sailing up the rivers, he was perfectly *au fait* to the meaning of this intimation, and accordingly a response notifying that we were only the '*avant courier*' of a man-of-war's boat well manned, secured a free passport without the customary imposition of a donation.

We were all at length, safely debarked at the ferry-house, and whatever may be the affectation ascribed to military men, our gallants appeared to have escaped that maudlin absurdity so much pretended by would-be sentimentalists, who, though eschewing not 'the flesh-pots' for their own particular consolation, insist that it destroys the ideal of women to be seen eating, for certes our sons of Mars upon this occasion proved anything but patronizers of this sickly sentimentality; their pic-nic lottery, though not, like Bish and Carroll's, realising twenty thousands, having secured to us many prizes not to be contemned by the most fastidious after a day's starvation upon the water, in the more real than poetic shape of hams, tongues, chickens, wine, and London porter!

Our party were seen dispersed

'Through winding streams, and flowing meads among,'

in such groups as fancy or flirtation suggested; but as it is not my intention to publish a tale of scandal, I shall merely confine myself to one or two remarkable persons who *embellished* our circle.

The first I shall introduce to my readers is Miss Mary Harkaway, one of the most exquisitely beautiful creatures that eyes ever beheld. The poet never dreamt of anything that looked more like a divinity,—but alas! the sculptor never chiselled a colder piece of marble. It was amusing to observe the effect she produced upon a stranger; as for the *habitués*, they avoided her as though they apprehended a fit of the ague, but the instant a NEWCOME appeared at the ball-room, the first glance of Mary Harkaway fixed him in admiration. There she sat, in her beauty looking like an angel; a second glance, and a suspicion that she was proud began to arise; on the third, her admirer was under the full gaze of her large blue eyes; and if he were not stared down by the still cold look that went round his heart and round his heart, without ever touching his heart, like the subject of the child's riddle, 'which went round the house, and round the house, without ever touching the house,' the honour of dawdling through a dance with her, and the single drawling 'I'm so tired,' that formed the ultimatum of her condescension, generally served as a receipt in full for all future attentions; and at the first possible opportunity her emancipated adorer might be seen gladly transferring his devoirs to her sister, a gay, laughing, chattering girl, with a good person and a face that seemed plain beside that of the beauty, or in *her* absence, falling into animated conversation with an elder one, who in virtue of a considerable superiority of years, and the accidental loss of personal graces, chaperoned her sisters, and who never failed, by her sparkling and witty repartee, to detain any beaux to whom she pleased to direct her attention; so inferior, after all, are personal charms compared to those of the mind.

The beautiful iceberg was a natural curiosity; her *stare* was the most extraordinary achievement I ever witnessed: she would fix her eyes upon your countenance, and stare, and stare, and stare again, till, if a woman were the victim, brow, cheek, and neck became one blaze—still those large unwinking eyes stared on. Men celebrated for their effrontery wagered that they would outstare her, but even they were convicted of blushing themselves into defeat. It is, however, asserted that *one* Irishman sustained the assault of the staring battery with unblushing honours. Some pretend that he actually vanquished his fair antagonist, but that I think apocryphal,—knowing the characteristic modesty of his countrymen when a lady is in the case. Nor was this the only amusement Miss Mary afforded; one was the endeavour to detect her in the act of smiling. I have seen many eyes suddenly directed towards her, whilst bursts of merriment convulsed the audience during a dramatic entertainment, but there was the same imperturbable countenance, beautiful, cold and marmoral.

But it must not be imagined that Miss Mary Harkaway was altogether so passive as her company face indicated; for if report spoke truth, her home was the scene of a thousand petulant caprices, all tending to show that the end and object of her life was the preservation of her personal charms; for this she submitted to the most careful regimen, and the most studiously self-imposed penalties, one of which was, that she insisted that her bedclothes should be pinned with the most scrupulous precision in order that during sleep she might not derange the harmony of her figure, nor be offended by a fold, for to her delicate perceptions the crumpling of Nora Creina's rose-leaves would have been as—as—crumbs of bread in the same situation; which reader, if you have any curiosity to experience in perfection, I recommend to you to share your couch with a sweet little hungry pet, who cries for a crust in the middle of the night, and then you will enjoy the full benefit of my comparison. With all her care, however, Mary's

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sisters were all maried, whilst she was left to rejoice in the spinsterial appellation of the beautiful Miss Harkaway.

Then there was Captain Lovelace, an exquisite of the first order, delicate, fair and lady-like, with a very small waist, and a very large bust, just exported from Bond-street, replete with metropolitan *bon-mots* and aristocratic scandal, who arranged his hair at night *en papilottes*, and wore poultice-gloves to preserve the delicacy of his hands: he would have made an appropriate husband for the charming Miss Harkaway, but two negatives do not always make an affirmative. I must next sketch a gentleman remarkable in quite another way; he had *had* very long feet, (I use the preterpluperfect, because they were no longer long.) Most men are content to take their members as people do each other in marriage, for better or for worse, but our hero had suffered himself to be quizzed by some of our wags into the notion that to possess a pair of ungraceful feet was a monstrous calamity; and as they derived amusement from the reflection that a protracted convalescence would afford a very considerable number of guards and picquets to be brought up, in conformity with the standing order, which required that all duties missed during illness should be fulfilled on recovery, they determined to have our hero placed on the sick list, and for that purpose persuaded him that his feet were just half a toe too long; a fact over which he had so often lamented in secret, that he was easily cajoled to allow that half a toe could be very easily lopped off, and so actually insisted upon such an amputation for the improvement of his feet. He was then just recovering from the effects of this exploit, and was beginning to discover that what he had gained in beauty he had lost in speed; and was like many others repenting at leisure for having allowed himself to be laughed into a hasty decision; and before his arrear of duties was made good, he would have given half his pay to purchase back his half toes: but repentance came too late, he had behaved like a goose, and he was fated to waddle like a duck for the remainder of his days. The only way that I ever heard of his converting his loss into profit, was by laying small wagers that he had fewer nails in his boots than any person in company. Neither must I omit to record a little *tête-à-tête* which I chanced to overhear as the parties sauntered near me, I the while in a half poetic, half idle mood, dawdling on the river's bank. The gentleman was using his best endeavours to render himself agreeable, and I trust that by transmitting his style to the public I shall be considered to be conferring an edifying obligation upon all amatory students.

Rosalie de Montmorency, the only child of an aged officer of rank and fortune, was young, fragile, and graceful. Her full dark eyes, that now dwelt thoughtfully on the earth, now fervently swept the heavens, revealed a mind deeply enthusiastic. By her parents she was guarded with the most jealous care, and the infant that clings smiling to its mother's breast is not more innocent than was Rosalie.

Amongst the visitors at the general's house, none were so favoured as Henry Constantine, a scion of a noble family, notwithstanding that his *outrés* opinions and eccentric habits had rendered him remarkable. Prominent amongst these was his avowed scorn for all the conventions and pleasures of life, even while he indulged in some of the most refined luxuries; thus, he declared that those who could abridge the demands of humanity, were worthy of the first rank among philosophers. In conformity with this theory he slept but three hours during night; but then, he rested upon a couch so costly and luxurious, that it might have been dedicated to the most delicate of Beauty's daughters.

In what occupation he passed the intervening hours none knew, save that he sometimes confessed to have impersonated the various Ariel sprites with whom the Rock has the reputation of being populated; sentries were frightened from their posts by the vision of a white spectre, gauntly striding on the top of his garden wall, and occasionally haunting the precincts of Rosalie's home; whilst the inmates slumbered unconscious of his ghostly contiguity. At seven he was permitted to enter the general's library, and privileged to remain a silent spectator of Rosalie's studies under the complaisant superintendence of Madame Le Blanc, she, all the while, quite unconscious that she had inspired any admiration in the phlegmatic person who took every opportunity to descant upon her faults, went on with her pursuits, precisely as if such an intruder had not been in existence.

Another of his singularities was, that he took but one daily repast; he loved, he said to adopt the customs of any country in which he sojourned, and scrupulously confined his appetite to the dish most in use there; so in Spain it was always an olio; in England, I presume, it would have been roast beef. In wine he was not more indulgent, as he limited himself to one glass. His dress was a model for plainness, but it was made to perfection by the most fashionable London artist, and all the appendages of his toilette were exported from the most celebrated repositories. The clearest rill that ever gurgled from its rocky bed was not deemed sufficiently pure for his ablutions; for these the richest distillations of herb and flower were employed, and sent to him per case, as others purchase claret. He moved in a cloud of odour, for his attire was literally steeped in sweets, but upon the pale cold lip there sat a perpetual bitterness. Upon the sallow cheek a sarcastic smile had become habitual; yet whilst to his associates he spoke but to admonish, amongst the poor, words of comfort and consolation dropped as honeyed balm from his lips, and his income was liberally dispensed wherever he encountered a child of affliction.

To show that his exploits, however, sometimes took a serious form, I may just here mention, that upon one occasion the Wesleyan chapel was entered by night, the doors taken off their hinges, and to the horror of the congregation, all their Bibles and hymn-books carried away.

The following day the whole garrison was in consternation; rewards to a great amount were publicly offered for the apprehension of the sacrilegious marauder, but neither he nor the books were discovered, the latter being all packed off to England, and Henry Constantine, to this hour, I believe, remains unsuspected.

It was strange that a man of such strict religious views, according to his own particular

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creed, should have committed so reprehensible an action. It arose from having taken it into his head to doubt the sincerity of some of the professors, and so he visited all with his displeasure. I believe that I was the sole repository of the secret, though certainly not an accomplice before the fact; but how the revelation came to rest in my keeping, is a secret which I do not mean to reveal.

Such was the extraordinary but by no means unworthy person, who upon the morning previous to our excursion had formally proposed to the general for his fair and gentle daughter; who, with her enthusiastic nature, had formed to herself a beau idéal so far above humanity, that the most amiable of the lordly sex might have blushed to have tested his merits by such a standard.

Startled and amazed as Rosalie had been by the communication of her conquest, she was too well accustomed to obey, as well as too untutored in the feelings of her own heart, to dream of questioning the will of her parents; and when, in signifying their approval, they congratulated her upon her happy destiny, and assured her that the merits of her future lord far outweighed his peculiarities, she curtseyed her assent, and took the whole upon trust, and the *tête-à-tête* with which the lovers were indulged upon the morning of our excursion, was their first interview since they had stood in such a relation to each other.

They had wandered a few paces silently, Rosalie plucking the wild flowers that garnished the bank, when suddenly finding one more lovely than the rest, she exclaimed, 'O how beautiful—is it not?' holding the treasure as she spoke towards her companion. He gazed upon her glowing countenance with a chilly smile that must have been a very unfaithful index of his feelings, as he sarcastically replied,

'When will you learn, Miss De Montmorency, that beauty is altogether worthless? Beauty! psha!' and he flung the flower into the river; 'the wise despise beauty!'

'Then I am very simple,' replied Rosalie, in her sweet manner, 'for 'tis always charming to me.'

'But you love admiration more, else why those roses in your hair? Do you think that the adornments which Nature has bestowed are improved by the contemptible assistance of art?'

'I wear them because they are fashionable.'

'Psha! what a reason! fashion indeed! fashion makes people hideous. Are you content to disfigure yourself because fools call every absurdity, fashion?'

'Certainly not; but these roses, do you really think them unbecoming?' and Rosalie threw back her hat, and shaking her clustering curls, presented the *soi-disant* stoic with one of her most enchanting looks.

'Unbecoming!—why, certainly—no, not exactly—that is—Miss De Montmorency, beware of becoming a coquette—you have all the elements of one—you—'

'I'll discard my roses this moment, if you object to them,' said Rosalie, though somewhat piqued.

'Now why do that?' interrupted the querulous monitor. 'Why should you feel concerned whether your appearance is agreeable or otherwise? It argues that you set too high a value upon the opinion of others.'

'Ought I not to wish to please *you*?' asked Rosalie, ingenuously.

The innocent artlessness of this reply seemed to disarm the cynic, for he remained silent a few moments, and, when he spoke again, his tone was gentler.

'May I hope, Miss De Montmorency, that the proposals which the general did me the honour to accept were not disagreeable to you?'

'I never dispute my father's will,' said Rosalie, timidly.

'I was prepared to expect docility from the daughter of General De Montmorency,' said the lover; 'and I trust that time and assiduity may obtain me the preference which, if I mistake not, Miss De Montmorency has still to bestow.'

Rosalie bowed.

'Perhaps you may not be aware that I leave the Rock to-morrow?'

Rosalie started, and I fancied that her step became more elastic, as though a weight had been removed.

'I go,' he pursued, 'to England, on business of importance to the government; probably I may be detained some months, and when I return, our nuptials shall be at once celebrated, when I shall hasten to place my bride in a more distinguished circle, which her presence will adorn.'

Rosalie smiled.

'You need not smile, Miss De Montmorency; I am not used to compliment, yet mistake not my cold exterior for the indication of an icy heart;—hour after hour have I sat by unseen, listening to the music of your voice—'

'Whilst I was reading theology!' said Rosalie.

'I heeded not the subject; in looking upon you I forgot all else—you were my ideal.'

Rosalie thought of hers, and sighed; but, with a girlish volatility, said, 'Why scold me then?'

'I would have you perfect; but judge if, upon my return, I could bear to be trifled with? I could not—I would not! Answer me—do you acknowledge the engagement?'

'I do,' she tremulously murmured.

'Then listen to me. I will have no flirtations in my absence; no love-speeches;—do you mark me? I will not be forsaken—you are mine for life or death!'

Rosalie answered not, but her step faltered, her cheek grew pale.

'Listen,' he continued, 'I will tell you a story. There was a monk once who became confessor to the daughter of an Italian noble. The lady was very fair, and the monk at an age when passion masters duty. So it was that the monk loved—not as the rippling brook, that babbles as it goes, and straight expends its strength, ran the current of his devotion, but as the still lake, that deepens hour by hour, until it bursts its bank, involving all that opposed its course in general ruin. So loved the monk, in silence and despair. At last, a suitor to the lady came—an accepted one. The nuptial feast was made, the bridal guests were come, the lover by the altar waited, the count prepared to lead his daughter forth, the lady knelt before her confessor, and prayed for absolution, but he for answer gave his own confes-

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sion; then, ere a shriek could tell her detestation of his sin, his knife had stilled the beating of her heart, and drank the bubbling life-blood of his own. "For me," he cried, "thou wouldst not choose to live—I will not suffer thee to live another's." And such is *my* passion—such *would* be my revenge!'

What might have been Rosalie's previous impression I cannot say, but there is no doubt that Henry Constantine, in this *chef-d'œuvre* of the agreeable, committed such a miserable mistake, that from that moment his very name became odious to her, and certain it was that she did not fulfil her promise. One of his vagaries so much offended the general, that he formally terminated the engagement, and Rosalie married a very different sort of person, though scarcely one iota nearer to her ideal; and, lest any person should be tempted to waste their superabundant apprehensions on the subject, I beg leave to assure them that Henry Constantine did not kill either himself or his faithless love, though it must be confessed that it was some months before she felt perfectly confident of her safety; and he, for aught I know to the contrary, is at this moment dining off roast beef in Belgrave Square, or satirizing fashion, although perfuming Regent Street with his handkerchief, and ambitiously emulating Count D'Orsay's coat. So much for lovers' vows at three-and-twenty; so much for man's consistency at all ages.

A cry of distress and a general bustle about the ferry-house now attracted all our stragglers, and we amongst the rest hastened to the spot. Presently the crowd opened, and we saw the merchant's boat, and a person born from it apparently hurt. It was one of the party we had passed in the bay, who was to have been married the following week to a handsome girl that hung weeping over him.

With true bull-headedness, they had refused the accustomed fees to the sentinel at the mouth of the river, resolved, as they said, to resist imposition; and he, not apprehending from them any resistance more dangerous than that of the tongue, had fired a random shot at their boat as it flew past him, and mortally wounded the intended bridegroom. As unfortunately we had not a medical officer in the party, we could not render him any useful assistance; he was, consequently, hastily replaced in the boat, but, before they reached the garrison, all his mortal wants had ceased.

I need scarcely state that an event like this had greatly chilled our mirth; for, though scarcely known to the persons concerned, it could not be supposed that a scene such as we had witnessed could pass without awakening serious considerations even in the most giddy and thoughtless, and our *day of pleasure* was fast clouding into sober sadness, when a slight incident drew our attention to another quarter.

Miss Henwood had lost her companion, and though disposed to coo in the most approved dove fashion, the response of the mate was indispensable to the harmony of the duet.

'Where can Mr. Sylvester be?' rang from lip to lip; we hunted, we searched, in the house out of the house, behind the door, up the chimney, rhyming,

'Riddle me, riddle me, riddle me ree,
Where can the poet Sylvester be?'

Our repast was set out on the grass, under orange trees. Colonel Macgregor presided over the turkey, Major Shadworth assailed the ham, and the captain uncovered a war dish of culinary combustibles, manufactured upon the most approved peninsular principles. The odorous gale was wafted upwards, a rustling was heard overhead, and lo! there sat revealed Lieutenant Sylvester, upon the branch of an orange tree, starting from an ecstasy of composition, and peering down with longing eyes, equally forgetful of love and muses, thus clearly demonstrating that important and abstruse metaphysical fact, that the nose and the stomach sympathise more acutely than the ear and the heart.

Presently down dropped a precious *morçeau*, the very essence of the poet's cranium—the paper bearing the well-defined marks of having passed a warm day in his cap, where it had been deposited in readiness to receive his inspired lucubrations, and the poetry exhibiting full evidence of the chaotic brain where it had been engendered. Down it fell like lead, accurately following the laws of gravitation, plump into the lap of the fair Clarissa, and after it came, head foremost, the bard himself, literally following his nose. Crash, crash, went the branches; 'Oh! ah!' screamed the ladies, foreseeing a catastrophe; 'Stand clear,' shouted the gentlemen, securing the dishes. But no; 'thanks to good broad cloth,' as Bailie Nicol Jarvie says, the lieutenant stuck fast upon a friendly bough, dangling face downwards. There was a sudden spring among those beneath, as they respectfully vacated their seats in favour of the descendant from Mount Olympus. Swing, swang, went the poet. 'Ah me!' cried Clarissa. Then there was a sharp, rending noise, and down flopped the disciple of the Muses all fours on the grass, not to be irreverent, like a huge toad upon a stagnant pool. But what had the lieutenant left behind him? Something was still dangling there, very like a very large piece of broadcloth. Upon that subject, however, the least said is the soonest mended, which was more than poor Mr. Sylvester's never-to-be-spokenables were, for it was nearly an hour before his reappearance among us, after being escorted from our presence by a full guard of honour, who closed round him in a great hurry, as if they wished to spare his blushes, or those of the ladies. During his absence, we amused ourselves with a perusal of his verses. Here they are. Poor lieutenant! I am sure that he did not find it a day of pleasure.

TO THE QUEEN OF BEAUTY.

Here, in a grove etherially sublimed,
I sit, ah me! the pastoral child of song!
Happy for him whose muse hath never climbed!
Happy for him whose pinion's not so long!

For I betimes from earth must take my flights,
Though heavenward borne, yet still to leave behind
Such gentle hearts, in which my muse delights,
Such as Clarissa's, none in clouds to find.

The sun is bright, but brighter far when he
Exhales her image, as when morning dew
From the bright posies, sweet as poesy,
Is by his rays made vapour to our view,

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The shepherd's pipe, as through Iberia's plains
He tunes to home, alike his love and sheep,
Is not more gentle than the light that reigns
Enthroned in eyes majestically deep.

Behold her of our feast the sweetest *tart*,
Of all our viands none so sweet as she;
Better by nature pressed than they by art,
Her breath the nectar of the company.

There are some poets that would fain combine
The past and present with the future hope,
As'twere all tenses in one garland twine,
Viewing the *to be* through a telescope.

Not so for me, that I at present love,
Have loved, shall love, is quite enough, my dear;
No Galilean tube need they approve,
Whose mental eye can make all far things near!

The philosophical throes of the concluding verses contending with the smoking temptations below, no doubt produced such a confusion in the brain of our laureate, as to overbalance his centre of gravity, and thus for ever deprived posterity of the remainder of this very lucid and pathetic elegy. The pearls, however, that fall from genius are too precious not to be gathered and preserved, even though the string be broken.

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THE METROPOLITAN.

No. CXXV.

SEPTEMBER, 1841.

THE BLUE BELLES OF ENGLAND.

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXIV.

CONNUBIAL JOYS IN PERSPECTIVE—FILIAL INFLUENCE, MATERNAL INDULGENCE, AND SISTERLY CONFIDENCE.

It would be very idly superfluous to describe the satisfaction of Mrs. Hartley on learning, upon her return from Lady Stephens' party, what had passed between Sir James Ridley and her daughter Margaretta during her absence. All this maternal gladness, and womanly triumph at success, shall be passed *sous silence*, while the narrative goes on to relate the more substantial consequences which arose from it.

If the mother and her favourite daughter had heretofore been addicted to *tête-à-tête* breakfastings, when the pleasure of them consisted wholly in the discussion of hopeful possibilities, it will be readily believed that the present position of affairs would render such a meeting a thousand times more delightful still; and accordingly on the following morning, the arrangement which has been before described as so agreeable to the whole family, again took place; —that is to say, Mrs. Hartley and Margaretta enjoyed the shady retreat of the boudoir, Caroline the *dolce reposo* of her bed, and Constance and her friend Penelope the undisturbed possession of the drawing-room.

'Your conduct, my dearest love, through the whole of this business, has been most admirable, and justifies the hope that, with the noble fortune which your beauty and your talents have secured to you, your future existence will be a model of what the life of a well-educated young woman of fashion ought to be. I congratulate you, my darling child, with all the virtuous pride and tender fondness of a happy mother, rewarded for all her care!'

Such were the sounds that, in the crested pride of Mrs. Hartley, were uttered as she first met her daughter, who, having received the maternal salute with the philosophical sort of composure which made so essential a part of her character, replied, 'Thank you, mamma. I am very glad it is done, I promise you; for he's such an uncommon fool, and so utterly devoid of everything like the spirit and feeling of a man, that it has not only been very dull work, but very difficult too, I do assure you. For though the idea of doing me this immense honour has been gradually working its way into his obtuse brain from the first hour, I believe, that I set about the business, it was impossible to be sure that he would ever have had the courage to bestow the inestimable treasure of his person upon any mortal woman. However, thank Heaven, he has committed himself, and cannot possibly retract. So now, dear mamma, let us forget him as much as we possibly can, and talk about the things I must order, and the horses, and the carriages, and all that. You must remember, if you please, that though the most important part of the business is done, we must take good care not to let him get the bit between his teeth, which he has an extremely good inclination to do, I am certain, from his behaviour to his sister. I declare to Heaven, mamma, that if his estate were double, and that he could put a coronet, instead of a bloody hand, upon my carriage, I would not marry him if I thought I could not continue to manage him.'

'Fear nothing, my dearest love, on that score,' replied her mother. 'The same masterly mind which has already seen through all the complicated little machinery of his contemptible character, and has so managed its springs and its screws as to make him do precisely the thing which it seemed to be the great object of his life to guard against, has no great reason to fear

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that, as power strengthens, means of using it will decrease. He may, perhaps, be naturally stubborn, but he is a fool, Margaretta; whilst you, dearest, are firm, with tact and talent to make him hate all he loves, and love all he hates, if such be your will.'

'*Ainsi soit il*,' replied the young lady. 'But now, mamma, for goodness' sake tell me what I am to do about clothes. You are so constantly employed *à chanter misère*, that I give you my honour I am terrified lest you should not be able to raise the sum necessary. With *less* than five hundred pounds, I neither can nor will attempt to carry the thing through. Were I in love, you know, mamma, it would be quite a different sort of business; but I would a great deal rather make up my mind not to marry at all just at present, than marry such an animal as this without the comfort of having a few nice things at setting off.'

The complexion of Mrs. Hartley was a little heightened in colour by this speech. She had made up her mind, notwithstanding the unfortunate circumstance of her having the family fortunes entirely at her command, to raise the sum of three hundred pounds for the 'joyful occasion' at present under discussion; but the addition to this so stoutly demanded by her daughter rather startled her. She remembered, however, the *firmness* upon which she had just complimented the young lady, and replied, with great gentleness,

'I had hoped, dearest, that three hundred might have done, especially as I intend to take care that an ample allowance for pin-money shall make part of the settlement. I therefore thought, my love, that what with the presents we shall get out of him, and by taking care that nothing was bought excepting what would contribute to your appearance, we could have done very well with that sum—and, alas! though I never, since she was able to ask it, have refused my darling Margaret anything without a pang, and at this moment every indulgent feeling is, of course, multiplied a thousand fold, yet, with all this, my dearest girl, I know not what on earth I can do to raise such a sum as you mention.'

'Where there is a will there is a way, mamma. The proverb is somewhat musty, but not the less true for that. And as to getting presents out of him, I do assure you that, though I am certainly not quite in despair as to recovering the power of exerting myself again by-and-bye, I am positively weary and worn out with the unceasing series of exertions I have been making, in order to persuade my golden calf that black was white, and hatred love. In this I have succeeded, and now I positively must repose a little. Whatever you think you may be able to do in the way of making him fancy it a fine thing to be generous, pray do it—I have not the slightest objection; but as for me, I shall do nothing beyond giving a few hints about the carriage, or a word or two, perhaps, about the house;—I will not go begging or coaxing for decent clothes to wear, that you may depend upon, mamma—and, in one word, which may just as well be spoken first as last, unless you can let me have five hundred pounds down for my wedding clothes, I will not marry Sir James Ridley at all."

Mrs. Hartley knew her favourite daughter well, and would hardly have carried matters to the dangerous extremity of refusal if her demand had been double. As it was, she got up, kissed her forehead, declared that she was perfectly right in being steady upon a point to which she judiciously attached so much importance, vowed she would rather sell her plate than disappoint her, and then led the conversation to squares, and gardens, and terraces, for the delightful purpose of ascertaining which would furnish a residence most consonant to the taste of her darling child, hinting, meanwhile, that she thought she might herself have some little influence in leading her future son-in-law to select what she should recommend.

* * * *

Whether it were that Constance felt particularly anxious that morning respecting the affairs of Penelope, or that she felt no inclination to discuss her own, may be doubtful; but whatever the cause, the two friends no sooner found themselves *seule à seule* over their breakfast table, than the affianced bride began talking to the long-betrothed maiden on the painful subject of the difficulties which were still likely, for a period most sadly indefinite, to keep her and her beloved asunder.

Poor Penelope, despite all her efforts to prevent it, shed tears over this almost hopeless theme, till, ashamed of the gloom she was bringing to mix with the happier prospects of her friend, she assumed an air of cheerfulness, and said, 'By-the-bye, Constance, I am rather sorry that fate and fortune did not give you Mr. Fitzosborne for an adorer, instead of Mr. Mortimer; for albeit he is no poet, he is, as I happened to learn last night, nephew to one who has great interest, or rather great authority, in the only direction where poor Markham can look for aid; so, if it had happened, that he had fallen in love with you, who knows but that we might have been married together? I am quite sure, Constance, that my elderly young ladyhood is becoming every day more irksome both to mamma and Margaret, and I feel certain that the addresses of Captain Markham might be accepted with very little opposition.'

Constance listened to this with great attention; and though she certainly did not make up her mind to join in Penelope's wish respecting Mr. Fitzosborne, it occurred to her as possible that some occasion might arise in which, slight as was her acquaintance with him, she might so state the case of Markham as to interest the great man's nephew in his favour. But the hope was much too vague to be spoken of to one whom it concerned so nearly, and Constance therefore turned the conversation into another channel by asking Penelope what she thought of Mr. Marsh's devoted attention to Mrs. Hartley. 'Were it not,' she said, 'that I believe your mother to be much too wise a woman to marry a man more than a dozen years her junior, I should really begin to suspect something.'

'And did *I* not think it impossible that any young man so wealthy as Mr. Marsh is said to

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be, would bestow himself upon a middle-aged lady with three grown-up daughters, I should suspect too,' replied Penelope. 'But it is too absurdly unlike to think of for a moment. I therefore conclude that Mr. Marsh is one of those cautious men of money, who prefer the safe honour of fluttering round a handsome widow, not quite young enough to be irresistible, to the danger of raising hopes in the tender bosoms of her portionless daughters.—But, mercy on me! there is mamma's voice already! What can make her come down so soon?'.

Penelope was not mistaken; it was her mother's voice which she had heard; and what was more extraordinary still, the person she addressed, and who was emerging with her at so unusually early an hour from the boudoir beatitudes of confidential gossip, and a committee on toilet ways and means, was no other than her sister Margaretta, who very rarely, if permitted to breakfast up stairs, thought it necessary to appear below till the carriage was announced as ready to receive herself and her unblemished dress.

That 'out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh,' is a truth incontrovertible; and whether this fulness proceeds from joy or sorrow; from melting affection or from swelling vanity; from the longing to proclaim a triumph or detail a grief; the necessity for the outpouring is the same, and can seldom be resisted, as long as ears in any way fitted to be recipients are within reach. Few young ladies were less disposed to trouble an elder sister by confidential disclosures than Miss Margaretta Hartley; but no sooner had she settled with her mamma the knotty point respecting the five hundred pounds, than that *épanchement de cœur* of which we have been speaking, came so strongly upon her, as to make her start up and exclaim,

'Now, mamma, let us go down stairs, and announce the news in the drawing-room. I confess I feel some little curiosity to see how Miss Constance will take it. She has always taken especial good care to let me know, that, in comparison to the sage Penelope, she considered me as little better than a figure in a puppet-show—and now, perhaps, I may appear to her of rather more importance. Perhaps the erudite Penelope, herself, too, may be brought to the wholesome conviction, that when a decent amount of thousands per annum are laid at the feet of a portionless damsel, it is quite as well to take them up and spend them as to throw them away. You must announce it, you know, and pray do it in good style. *Allons!*'

And so saying, the triumphant fair one passed her arm under that of her mother, and they descended together to the drawing-room.

'What! still at breakfast?' exclaimed Mrs. Hartley gaily. 'O you idle girls! But you will leave sipping of your coffee, I suspect, when you hear what we are come to tell you. I have important news for you, my dearest Constance, which I hope and trust will be as delightful to your feelings as to mine. The friendship that unites us, my dear girl, will not long continue to be our only tie. Your brother, Constance, is about to become a very dear son to me—he is going to be married to my Margaretta.'

Had not Constance so very often heard her brother declare that he was completely and for ever on his guard against all the young ladies who made love to him, she might perhaps have predicted such a termination to Margaretta's incessant exertions in that line as was now officially announced to her; but well knowing the exceedingly high value Sir James set upon himself, and upon all that belonged to him in the way of worldly goods, she really did feel very considerably astonished, and it was not without some exertion of self-command that she succeeded in concealing how much she was so. Had her brother been as dear to her as a worthier brother would have been, the task would have been more difficult still; as it was, she paid her compliments to her sister elect with so good a grace as to satisfy both the young lady and her mother, and to remove any impediment which her presence might otherwise have occasioned to the full flow of boastful satisfaction which filled their hearts.

'I shall be quite delighted if we can contrive to have you settle near me in town, Constance,' said the future Lady Ridley, in a tone of condescending patronage. 'But I am half afraid, dear, that Mr. Mortimer, even with your pretty little fortune to help him, will be obliged to choose his residence with more attention, probably, to economy than taste; whereas your brother, you know, of course, may choose where he will. However, I dare say you will be very happy—you must not think of these sort of things now—and I shall always be ready, I am sure, to do anything I can, if we decide upon having a villa near town for the summer, you know—in the way of vegetables, I mean, and country air, and so forth. Thank Heaven, Mr. Mortimer is decidedly the fashion, and that makes an enormous difference. I have no doubt in the world that we shall go on delightfully well.'

Constance thanked her with smiles that dimpled her fair face without an effort, and nothing could be more amicable than the tone in which the conversation was pursued.

Until this time, Penelope and Constance had been so decidedly the elected friends of each other, that Margaretta had rarely interfered between them by showing any particular attention to the sister of her beloved Sir James; but now, either the sympathy created by their approaching relationship, or by the similarity of situation produced by their being both 'engaged,' led her to assume rather suddenly a tone of affectionate *commérage* that seemed intended to exclude every one else. 'Don't you tremble, dear, to think of all we have got before us?' said she, suddenly dropping into a chair beside Constance, and so turning it as to present her back to her mother and sister. 'Mercy on me! isn't it terrible?—dresses, carriages, horses, servants, furniture, and all the rest of it! Upon my word, we must endeavour to help each other in true sisterly style, or we shall never get through it. Have you made up your mind, dear, upon how much you shall allow yourself

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for your wedding clothes? You are too prudent, I am sure, to set about it without fixing a limit, though, happy girl! you have no one to restrict you but yourself. However, I feel confident, dear Constance, that you have too much good sense, particularly under the circumstances—I mean, you know, about Mr. Mortimer's not having a large fortune—I feel, I say, quite confident that you will not think of spending more than I shall;—the fact is, to be sure, that you will not really require half as many first-rate handsome things as I shall. I am to have five hundred pounds. Do you think, dear, that you shall go beyond that?'

'I shall probably not spend half of it, Margaretta,' replied Constance, shaking her head gravely—'you forget how different our situations will be.'

'O no, I don't, not the least in the world, I assure you, and I must say I think it shows great good sense in you to remember it also. There are many, many girls, Constance, who in the same situation would only remember that they *could* get at the money, if they chose it, without ever recollecting the absurdity of appearing in the same style as the bride of a poor man, as other people may do who have married a rich man, and even with a title, perhaps. But, to be sure, nothing in the world can be so lamentably absurd; because, you know, that nobody in existence can be taken in by it. Yet people are such fools sometimes! However, I must say I am delighted to find you are not one of them—I like you all the better for it, I assure you.'

'I hope, my dear Margaretta, that we shall agree on all subjects as perfectly as we do on this,' replied Constance. 'I should be a very ill-chosen wife for Mr. Mortimer, were I to attempt in anything to vie with the wife of my brother in expense. I have no such purpose, I assure you.'

'Then will you let me ask you, my dear, dearest Constance, whether you intend to have anything to do with lace! I confess I shall be exceedingly anxious to know how you decide upon that subject, because it makes an immense difference. We must neither of us think of trinkets, of course, excepting what our respective lords and masters may think it proper to present; and I feel so confident that my dear Sir James will do everything in the best possible style, that I have not an anxiety about it. How lucky it is for you, Constance, that you are so very handsome! Of course we cannot expect that Mr. Mortimer, elegant as he is in every way, can venture to turn his thoughts towards diamonds—I am afraid, indeed, that it would be quite as well that he should not think of pearls either. But you will be sure to look beautiful, my dear, without anything of the kind whatever—and that's an immense advantage, particularly under the circumstances—whereas I—O there is such a difference! It will be absolutely impossible, I am perfectly sure, for me to look tolerably decent when I am presented, unless I have good diamonds. However, I have not an anxiety upon the subject—not the least in the world, I give you my word—I feel so perfectly confident that Sir James will do exactly what is right and proper for a man in his position! I hope he is aware that such are my feelings. I don't know anything that would vex me more than his fancying I had any fear or anxiety about it; and I wish you would tell him, dearest Constance, if you can find an opportunity, that I have such perfect confidence in his doing exactly what is right, that I do not seem, you may say, ever to have turned my thoughts towards it—only, of course, you know, you won't say that I ever mentioned the subject to you. Thank Heaven, I know that I may trust to your delicacy and right feeling, my dearest Constance, and for that reason I venture to talk to you without the slightest reserve.'

Constance listened to all this with as much attention and as little contempt as she could, and with great sincerity assured her elected sister that she need not fear her repeating anything she said to her brother. This was not quite the promise which Margaretta wished to receive; she was fain, however, to be contented with it; but soon feeling a want of better sympathy in her present interesting and enviable situation, she returned up stairs, summoned the two ladies' maids of the household, and held council with them and her mother till summoned to the drawing-room to receive Sir James upon his first appearance in the family as a declared and accepted lover; and then, poor girl! all the rainbow tints of the projected silks and satins, amidst which her fancy had been swelling, seemed suddenly to vanish, and be succeeded by—I know not what may best describe the atmosphere of ennui, but it was that which now settled round her, and sent her down to enact the part she had set her to perform, with nothing but steadfastness of purpose to sustain her under what she felt to be a most prodigious bore. But this sufficed. She made her appearance, raised her timid eyes, averted her blushing cheek, gave her trembling hand, and performed every other part of the routine expected and required, with the most irreproachable propriety of demeanour.

CHAPTER XXV.

A BRILLIANT SOIREE—A NEW ACQUAINTANCE—PROFITABLE USE MADE OF AN OLD ONE.

So rapidly had these important events followed each other, that Constance almost felt bewildered by them and everything connected with ordinary acquaintance and ordinary engagements was either wholly forgotten, or became so exceedingly unimportant as not to deserve a thought. Her whole heart and every moment of her time were hardly sufficient in her estimation as an offering to the man for whom it was henceforward her hope to live, and for whose sake she was more than willing, she was desirous, of giving up every other object. She felt almost oppressed by the novelty of her situation, and would have given much, oh! very much, could she have been transported back to Appleby, there to have enjoyed, without ostentation or publicity, the society of

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Mortimer, and the unobtrusive and affectionate sympathy of the dear old friend she had left there.

But in such feelings, and such wishes, Constance had no partner. To have hid his love from the public eye would, in the opinion of Mr. Mortimer, have been to rob it of all the radiance, and all the glory which belonged of right to every circumstance connected with himself. He had long, indeed, considered himself as belonging to the world too legitimately to render any divorce from it either desirable or proper, and however sweetly he might warble away upon foolscap about love among roses and violets, the only practical idea he had upon the subject was, that a man who had selected and been accepted by a woman admired by the world of fashion, had done himself honour, whereas any other choice was disgraceful.

But these different and very contradictory feelings were not compared together, and all things went on in the natural course of London love-making, as well between the accomplished poet and the beautiful novice, as between the conceited dupe and his wily mistress. The 'Morning Post' and the 'Court Journal' announced the approaching happiness of both pair; young ladies tittered as they saw them pass, and the young gentlemen raised their *lorgnettes*, whether near-sighted or not, in order to pronounce judgment on the choosers and the chosen.

But not for this did Mrs. Hartley deem the business of her London campaign over; for not only was her own particular, and as yet unacknowledged, matrimonial affair to be finally arranged, but her prophetic eye looked forward to the future through the present, and strong in purpose to outdo even Lady Dort herself in the splendour of her notoriety, as soon as the income of Mr. Marsh should be joined to her own, she was as eagerly bent on increasing her circle, and bringing herself forward, as if she still had a splendid establishment to seek for her favourite daughter. She gave a regular dinner-party once in each week, and that too in a style greatly beyond anything she had before attempted; she showed herself, and her now more than ever interesting party wherever she was invited, contrived everywhere to speak of Sir James' opera-box as her own, talked of Mortimer as 'dear Henry,' and, in short, found herself advancing rapidly to very precisely the exact place she wished to attain.

But although this general success has been thus stated *en grand*, the detail of her first literary *soirée* must not be omitted, as it led to some important results.

Mrs. Hartley would perhaps have been happier still when this triumphant evening arrived, had the now rather-eagerly-expected offer of the wealthy Marsh been actually made. But that prudent young man was determined to risk nothing unnecessarily; and the more he saw his elegant widow blaze before his eyes amidst all those evidences of wealth for which he was so keenly on the watch, the more anxious he became to render the acceptance of his audacious offer sure before he ventured to make it.

s this system of tactics, however, naturally increased the devotion of his manner, and the vigilance of *les petits soins*, with which ladies of all ages love to be surrounded, Mrs. Hartley's enjoyment of the brilliant hours now passing was not greatly lessened by the delay, and it would have been difficult to find any individual of the happy-seeming set that glittered through the spring-tide of the London season who was in all respects in so satisfactory a state of mind as herself.

Nothing could promise better than the evening in question; wisely determined not to trust altogether to the intellectual resources of her expected guests for the success of this studied part, Mrs. Hartley had secured a professional lady and gentleman in order to render her second drawing-room an agreeable refuge for any who might chance to find themselves wearying of the sublimity of the first. Another source of the confidence she felt that all would go well, arose from a promise which she had obtained from Mortimer that he would read one of his own compositions, not yet published, aloud. All the world too knew that one of her daughters was going to be very splendidly married, and that her beautiful guest had bestowed herself and her thousands on the popular poet whom all delighted to honour; for on neither point had Mrs. Hartley, when driving round the circle of her friends with the news, bound them very strictly to secrecy, so that when she descended from her toilet to the drawing-rooms, robed in the most becoming style of a 'very superior woman,' who nevertheless was still *à pretension*, she was in the most happy state of spirits imaginable.

The rooms filled fast, and really had altogether less the air of being superlatively dull than is often the case where the company has been for the most part selected on the principle of intellectual superiority. Constance looked so very lovely that she might herself have furnished forth the material for a brilliant salon, if there had been nothing else to look and wonder at. A large packet had been brought to her room while she was in the act of dressing, which, despite the remonstrances of her maid, was immediately opened, and found to contain all the published works of Henry Mortimer, very simply bound, but accompanied by the following precious note:

'From Henry Mortimer to his Constance!
'The only muse whom henceforward he will ask to smile upon him!'

Could all the jewels of the earth have produced an equal throb of triumph and of joy in the heart of Constance? O no! She felt herself the very happiest and most honoured lady ever exalted into pre-eminence by the love of man. The feeling sparkled in her eye, glowed on her cheek, and dimpled round her lip. As she gave a parting look at her mirror before she left her room, she saw that she was beautiful, and for the first time in her life she deliberately acknowledged the fact, and rejoiced. Yet was she not content with herself—she wished to be lovelier still, richer, more nobly born! She conceived that the greatest happiness Heaven could give must be the power of proving her de-

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votion to such a being as Mortimer. She flattered herself that there was not one of his poems which she had not read again and again. Nevertheless, she determined not to sleep that night till she had turned over each of the precious volumes, and rejoiced her spirit anew by the glory of the man whose name she so proudly hoped to bear. At the moment Mortimer entered, and that their eyes met, there was at least very perfect sympathy between them, for the heart of each swelled with delightful emotion. As to the exact proportion in which, in both cases, earth-born vanity was mixed with heaven-born love, it might be difficult to say; but it may be, that in this proportion too there was very perfect sympathy.

For the first half hour after his arrival he engrossed her wholly; having led her into the room appropriated to music, and placed her on one side of one of those double chairs invented for the purpose of making a *tête-à-tête* conspicuous, and himself in the other, he had the satisfaction of seeing every eye that entered fixed upon them, and nothing could be more elegant than the passionate devotion manifested by his manner, which, licensed by their proclaimed engagement, assumed all the happy confidence of successful love.

But here the *sympathy* existed no longer. Constance most certainly gloried in her illustrious lover; but, nevertheless, she wished not to exhibit her devotion in a crowd—she wished, on the contrary, from the very bottom of her heart, poor girl! that they could be transported to the old oak parlour at Appleby, with nobody but her dear grandmother to comment on their love.

Mr. Mortimer, however, was in one of his most delightful moods. He talked as none but a poet, and a poet of the world, could talk, and she soon forgot to think that she could be happier anywhere than she was then and there. But, alas, for the shortness of all earthly joys! One bright half hour had scarcely passed away when the eye of the poet was caught by the sight of some person in the other room, whereupon he started from the place he had occupied, and hastily saying, 'Excuse me for a moment,' glided away.

Constance would have liked, perhaps, to have made one step forward in order to ascertain who it might be for whose sake he had found it possible to break off a conversation so delightful; but neither love nor vanity had so far overpowered all other feelings as to induce her even to bend her neck forward to gratify this wish, and for a few moments the admired of all eyes sat forsaken and alone.

'Do look at our beautiful Constance, Markham,' said Penelope, who had ventured, while her mother's eyes, ears, and understanding were engaged elsewhere, to converse with all the freedom that a crowd permits with the only man whose conversation she wished to hear. 'Do look at her, as she sits alone there in her beauty. The people moving round her seem to think she is too divine to approach. Mr. Mortimer was with her a minute ago, but he has left her. I marvel that anything could tempt him to do so. Go to her, dear friend, will you? and bring her here; or, no—you had better stay with her till her truant poet returns, while I perform some of my *domestic* duties, by paying my compliments to a few dozen of dear friends, to whom I have not yet spoken.'

Markham looked half reproachfully at her, but did as he was bid, and the next moment found him in the seat which Mortimer had just occupied. Poetically in love though she was, Constance received her old friend kindly, and happening to remember what Penelope had lately said to her concerning Mr. Fitzosborne, and his interest at the Admiralty, she questioned him upon it, and obtained all the information he could give on the subject, determined that if chance should favour her doing so, she would introduce the parties to each other.

This theme being exhausted, and no Mortimer returning, Constance proposed their walking through the rooms together, and taking the arm of the handsome sailor, set off to make the attempt. But by this time the entrance to the longer room, through the folding doors that led to it, was completely blocked up, and her companion, sailor-like, and ever ready at resource, proposed that they should 'try the other gangway.' They accordingly placed themselves among the company still arriving by the stairs, and at length achieved an entrance to the principal room by the door which led from them.

Constance began to repent her enterprise, for to obtain a seat seemed impossible; but ere long she forgot that she wished for one, for she found herself in front of a group that completely rivetted her attention, though she beheld it only through an opening in the crowd which surrounded and concealed her. At the lower end of Mrs. Hartley's drawing-room were two ottomans, divided by a console. On the one farthest from the door sat the same lady whom she had formerly remarked at Lady Dort's, from the peculiar simplicity of her attire, from her being accompanied by a little girl that looked like a copy of herself in miniature, and from seeing Mortimer's having paid her very marked attention. Her dress was now precisely the same as she had seen it before—as before, the little miniature in white muslin sat beside her—as before, Henry Mortimer sat beside her on the other. Yet it is hardly correct to say she sat, for her position was infinitely more like lying, the back of her head resting on a cushion of the wide ottoman, while her feet were supported on a footstool which was placed at the greatest possible distance to which her feet could reach. Judging by the animation and evident amusement with which Mr. Mortimer listened to her, the vivacity of her conversation must have formed a striking contrast to the languor of her attitude. Neither of them appeared at all conscious of the crowd before them, or of the attention they excited; and though the lady spoke in some degree *sotto voce*, it was with such perfect distinctness that every word she uttered might be heard by every one stationed at a moderate distance.

'For Heaven's sake tell me,' said Mr. Mortimer, in reply to something which she had said before Constance had reached the spot where she now stood.

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'No, Mortimer, no! I will not trust you,' was the answer.

Her voice was deep and thrilling, and gave to everything she said an effect which the words alone, perhaps, would hardly convey.

'For Heaven's sake—for mercy's sake, tell me!' reiterated Mr. Mortimer.

'How dare I do it? Know I not that ere the iron hand of time has swung another hour away behind it, Mrs. Gardener Stewart will have it?'

Mr. Mortimer approached his lips very close to her ear and whispered something which produced a slight smile. She shook her head as much as her strange position would permit her to do, but after the interval of a moment added, in the same tone of mock heroic solemnity, 'Well, then, as I live and breathe, I heard Lady Stephens say to Mrs. Hartley as you entered, "Ah, the Bo-etian mist of ordinary life will now evaporate and disappear."'

'"Is it a Bœotian atmosphere, then, that we have breathed till now?" said my cousin Fitz, dwelling distinctly with his usual distressing good-nature on the diphthong that had so discomfited her erudition; upon which the little silly soul repeated Bœotian mist, Bœotian mist, Bœotian mist, with an air of such bitter distress, that had I the bowels of a Christian I could not tell it to you. But I have no bowels. Why am I the thing I hate?

"Non fu mai fatto guioco cosi pazzo."

Here am I, telling spiteful stories to you, who are as spiteful as a ferret, when I know that every ill-natured word I say will be sure to fly in my face and scratch me when I go to bed.'

She had raised her head a little as she uttered the last words, but replaced it when she had said them, and then closed her eyes for several minutes. After this she again raised herself, drew her footstool towards her, and said, 'Now I will be a little impertinent to these fine people who were so vastly fond of me at Naples. I can enjoy that sort of thing afterwards, even in the dark.'

She now raised her eye-glass, and fixing it as steadily as she would have done a telescope if about to take an observation, began to reconnoitre a party who had just entered, and who were evidently looking at her.

It was very evident that Mr. Mortimer did not sympathise in the amusement which she had now chosen for herself. The persons she was thus unceremoniously examining were of high rank, and, moreover, gave excellent dinners, from which poets were not excluded. He therefore whispered what he intended should be a very sincere remonstrance in the ear, of which the only audible words were, 'How *can* you?'

She looked at him as if she would have well liked to plague him a little longer, but the next moment dropped her glass, and answered,

'"Ma che? S'un diavolo ha più valore,
E più forza di me, come possio,
Far resistenza a possanza maggiore."'

Again Mr. Mortimer approached his lips to her ear, and Constance turned away, vexed at having been led, almost unconsciously, to listen thus far.

'I want to find Penelope again,' said she to her conductor—a hint which, as she probably knew, would inspire him with zeal sufficient to lead him skilfully through the crowd, and he performed the task so well, that they seemed to reach her as rapidly as if nothing had crossed their path to impede them.

Their passage, however, was not so rapid but that Mr. Fitzosborne, whom they met in the course of it, ventured to stop them for a moment to pay his compliments to Constance, and afterwards to accompany her till she found her friend; nor did he leave her then, for, as Markham made an involuntary step forward to place himself by the side of Penelope, Fitzosborne seized the opportunity for gratifying a curiosity which had tormented him for some time past, by asking the name of that gentleman. His doing so suggested to the friendly heart of Constance the possibility of speaking of him to 'one having interest at the Admiralty,' as she well knew he deserved, and looking up into Fitzosborne's face with a slight augmentation of colour, which puzzled while it charmed him, she said, 'I will tell you a great deal about him, Mr. Fitzosborne, if you will listen to me.'

'If I will listen to you?' he replied, with a smile; 'if that be the only condition necessary to my becoming acquainted with him, I shall soon be so—so far, at least, as knowing all that you may be pleased to tell me can make me.' And so saying, he presented his arm and led her to a part of the room where several chairs were left unoccupied, from the attraction of a favourite song which was being sung in the other room.

'And now, my dear Miss Ridley, what is it you have got to tell me about that very handsome young friend of yours?' said he.

Constance, who, though she did not lament her boldness, began to feel some little embarrassment as to the manner of opening the conversation to which it had led her, looked at him again with an eye that seemed to deprecate all severity of judgment upon what she was doing, and replied, 'I want to tell you, Mr. Fitzosborne, that John Markham's good looks are his least merit. He is one of the noblest-hearted young men in the world, and the bravest. I am quite certain that if you knew him, his character would command your esteem.'

Fitzosborne felt exceedingly puzzled to understand why the lovely Constance thus addressed him; but it was not in vain that he had so attentively, yet quietly, watched her conduct and manner through every scene in which he had met her. His judgment, deliberate as it generally was, had already gone far towards deciding that she was—in short, that whatever she said deserved to be listened to with attention, and therefore, with the very greatest attention he did listen for what she might say next, and when he found that she remained silent, he made an effort to continue the conversation himself by saying, 'I feel disposed to give him my esteem even without knowing him, Miss Ridley, so well convinced do I feel that he would not possess yours without deserving it.'

'That is very kindly said, Mr. Fitzosborne,

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replied Constance, whose embarrassment was by no means lessened by the pause which had enabled her to reflect a little upon the strange appearance which her conduct was likely to have in the eyes of her companion. 'I am very much obliged to you for it; but yet,' she added, rallying her courage, and remembering that the destiny of Penelope might hang upon her going well through the task she had undertaken; 'but yet it will not satisfy me. I want your esteem for him to stand upon a firmer basis—I want you to esteem him for his own sake, and from your own knowledge of him.'

'And how can I be fortunate enough to obtain that knowledge, Miss Ridley?' returned Fitzosborne.

'By inquiring among those who know him best—the officers of the ship in which he has served for years—the officers of the Phœnix.'

It was no longer possible for Fitzosborne to mistake the object of Constance in thus addressing him, and perfectly incapable of affecting to do so, he replied with a frankness that immediately relieved her embarrassment, 'You wish, Miss Ridley, that I should use my influence with my uncle for his promotion.'

'I do indeed, Mr. Fitzosborne,' said she, with a smile that seemed to thank him for having helped her forward to this decisive point of their discourse.

'Then you are quite right in bidding me make myself acquainted with his professional character, and I will not fail to do so. Have you known Mr. Markham long, Miss Ridley?' he added.

'As long as I have known myself, Mr. Fitzosborne,' she replied eagerly, her spirits rising from the conviction that she had already obtained *something* by the effort she had made, and which had certainly cost her something, 'and the longer and the better I know him, the stronger is my conviction of his worth.'

Fitzosborne looked at the speaking features with a degree of admiration which few men but himself could have prevented from being legible on his own; but a sharper-sighted young lady than Constance in such matters might have met his eye, as she did now, without reading in it anything beyond an earnest and most respectful desire to comply with the wishes she was confiding to him.

Had Constance not been known to all the world to be affianced to Mr. Mortimer, Mr. Fitzosborne's feelings during this conversation might have been different in many respects; but as it was, he seized upon the opportunity of obliging her with unmixed pleasure, and replied to her warm attestation of her regard for Markham by saying, 'May I ask you to introduce me to him?'

The heart of Constance leaped in her bosom for joy. 'O, thank you, Mr. Fitzosborne!' she exclaimed: 'that is precisely all I wished and wanted. He will be his own best advocate afterwards.'

It is possible that Mr. Fitzosborne, in making this request, did not foresee the necessity of its being complied with instantly, and might have anticipated the continuance of his conversation with Constance, till the favoured and accepted lover, whose success seemed so strangely indifferent to him, should appear to reclaim the privilege of being listened to before all others; but if he did thus calculate he was disappointed, for Constance rose immediately.

'I shall not be at ease till I have done my old friend this good office,' she said. 'There he is, Mr. Fitzosborne. Let us go to him immediately.'

Fitzosborne prepared to obey her, but said as he did so, 'Do not make me appear intolerably rude to Miss Hartley. Do you not perceive that she is in earnest conversation with him?'

'O, never mind that just now. Penelope will forgive me,' she replied with a smile that, little as she suspected it, put the observant Fitzosborne pretty nearly as much *au fait* of the whole matter as if he had been formally made a confidant of it. Averse as Constance would have been to making any such disclosure, she could scarcely have lamented the having done it, could she have been aware of its effect. Were it solely from the well authenticated fact that

'Fellow feeling makes us wondrous kind,'

or from other feelings mixed with it, which it might be less easy to trace and define, it is certain that no sooner did Mr. Fitzosborne understand the real state of the case, than he determined to smoothe the course of the true love he had discovered, to the utmost extent of his power.

The introduction which followed brought a bright flush to the face of Penelope, and caused her to bestow a look of such affectionate gratitude upon Constance, that had the preceding scene been attended with ten times more embarrassment she would have considered it as amply rewarded.

It is possible that the spirits of Constance were so cheered by the success of her efforts to bring these two gentlemen acquainted with each other, as to inspire the courage she had before wanted for making an inquiry which nothing but this want had so long delayed; for after they had chatted together for a minute or two upon such themes as usually suggest themselves when persons who have never met before are desirous to prove their inclination to meet again, she stopped them short by saying to Mr. Fitzosborne, 'Can you tell me who that lady is who is sitting beside that little girl on the ottoman?'

'Conversing with Mr. Mortimer?' returned Fitzosborne, slightly looking at her.

'Yes,' succinctly replied Constance.

'I shall be very happy to tell you, and moreover to make you better acquainted with her than by merely mentioning her name,' he answered. 'But will you allow me to ask you how it has happened that you do not know her already? That lady is my cousin, Mrs. Morley, and is an old acquaintance of Mrs. Hartley's.'

'Half-a-dozen untoward accidents have been the cause of this,' said Penelope, eagerly. 'The first time we called on Mrs. Morley, when Constance was with us, she was out; when that visit was returned, Miss Ridley was engaged in writing letters to Devonshire, and the day Mrs. Morley promised us the pleasure of her company at dinner she was too unwell to come. But "all

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is not lost that is delayed;" let us immediately endeavour to make up for lost time by making you, Mr. Fitzosborne, our master of the ceremonies.'

'I will undertake the office most willingly,' he replied. 'She has some few singularities that may startle you at first, but her noble qualities are more numerous as well as more important. Know her well, and you will like her much. Shall we go now?' he added, offering his arm to Constance.

Constance accepted his arm, but notwithstanding her curiosity to know something more of the lady who so evidently possessed the power of drawing Mortimer from her side, she liked not the idea of breaking in upon their *tête-à-tête*, and said, 'Must we go directly?'

'Not if you wish to delay it, or to go in any other direction first,' replied Fitzosborne, looking at her with something like surprise; but ere she could utter a word in reply, the thoughts that were passing in her mind seemed to have made their way into his, for he said to Penelope with sudden animation, 'I assure you I shall like nothing better than the bringing you acquainted with my eccentric cousin, but I wish you would first let us pass into the music-room. There is, I perceive, a young professional debutante just going to sing, who, if I mistake not, is suffering, *really* suffering from shyness. If Mr. Markham and I give her a few bravos, it will be an act of charity, not to mention that she has really great merit, for I heard her sing not long ago at Naples before her vocation, poor young thing! was finally decided on. Do you consent?'

This question being addressed to Penelope, was answered by a ready acquiescence, and the *partie carrée* made their way towards the pianoforte. But to find seats was impossible. Mrs. Hartley, in her desire to be superlatively brilliant on this occasion, had really underrated her own influence and the attractions of her drawing-room, and in her eagerness to secure the appearance of all the most literary and brilliant persons of her acquaintance, had collected together a greater number of people than her rooms could conveniently hold. But it rarely happens that any crowd, however painfully pressed together, can appear too densely packed to satisfy the unfriendly hospitality of the mistress of the house, and therefore, while nearly every one else looked half fainting, she still wore an aspect of enjoyment, and was in the very act of watching with the most perfect satisfaction the struggles of her friends for standing room, when Penelope and Constance, with the two gentlemen in attendance on them, reached the place where she stood.

'How a small crowd makes one's room look!' she exclaimed, addressing Mr. Fitzosborne. 'You would not believe that these measured above forty feet across, would you? It is very extraordinary how some people's houses always get thronged the moment they open their doors. I am sure I don't know how those good folks manage who always seem to have as many chairs as guests. I wish they would let me into their secret. Now remember, Markham, you must not tell tales of me, and write an account to dear quiet little Appleby of my having collected about three hundred people around me at once.'

Both gentlemen answered, as it was expected they would, by complimentary assurances that such a crowd must ever be delightful, that it was an enviable privilege to be permitted to make one in it, and the like; and in rejoinder Mrs. Hartley looked as handsome as it was well possible for a woman of five-and-forty to look, and smiled upon them both almost equally.

'By the way, Constance, what in the world have you done with Mortimer? Do not forget, dearest, that he has promised to read to us, and I shall look to you, my love, for selecting the moment when he will be most likely to keep his promise; *entre nous*, Mr. Fitzosborne, Mr. Mortimer, though a very handsome man, is in one respect exceedingly like a woman. Do I puzzle you?'

'You do, indeed,' replied Fitzosborne, 'and I entreat you to assuage the curiosity you have raised.'

'"He would be wooed, and not unsought be won."' returned Mrs. Hartley laughing. 'Pardon me, sweet Constance. I mean not in the usual sense of wooing. There he is willing enough to reverse the matter, and be himself the wooer. I speak but of his feelings as a poet. I have begged and implored for this promise, and as it was partly in your name, my fairest, I at length succeeded in obtaining it; but I confess I greatly fear that a little more wooing may be necessary, and it is to you, my love, I look for it.'

Constance shook her head.

'O you tyrant! you do not mean to refuse me, do you?'

'I really believe I do,' returned Constance, smiling.

'And I really believe,' replied Mrs. Hartley, looking grave, 'that you are by no means so unkind as to mean what you say. You know not how many persons will be disappointed by it.'

'Whatever Mr. Mortimer has promised, he doubtless will perform, if the promise was unconditional,' said Markham, looking very much as if he thought his friend Constance right in not consenting to plead for the performance.

'You are an excellent officer, I have no doubt, my good Markham, on board; we have all heard a vast deal about that: but you must forgive me if I question your being quite *au fait* with the manœuvrings necessary to the management of a first-rate poet. A first-rate man-of-war is a trifle to it, my dear friend, so I must beg and entreat that you do not interfere to counteract my influence with *la belle fiancée* here, to obtain her assistance in the business,' said Mrs. Hartley.

'Let me offer myself as a nuncio,' said Fitzosborne, remarking the heightened colour of Constance. 'We were just going where I think we shall find the gentleman in question. I hope, young ladies, you have not forgotten *your* promises respecting Mrs. Morley. Shall we seek her now?'

Glad to escape further importunity from Mrs.

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Hartley to do what she felt would be very particularly disagreeable to her, Constance readily expressed her acquiescence, and the quartette set off again in the same order as before.

In all large parties there is a high tide, which often seems to remain at its climax for no longer a pause than that of the ocean, retreating as soon as its extremest limit is reached. This receding moment now began to be perceptible in the rooms of Mrs. Hartley, and it was with less difficulty than they expected that the party who sought Mrs. Morley were permitted to approach her. She still occupied the same seat, but Mr. Mortimer was no longer beside her, his graceful figure being now conspicuous in earnest conversation with the Countess of M***, who, in point of rank was the star of the evening.

Constance experienced something like a feeling of relief at finding that she was not going to interrupt the *tête-à-tête* she had witnessed, which she had alarmed herself by thinking would look exceedingly like a personal reclamation of her truant lover; the removal of this fear restored her to her natural and graceful ease of manner, and she was much more able to do justice to the cordial wish she felt to make acquaintance with the cousin of Mr. Fitzosborne, than she would have been had Mortimer still remained beside her.

It was evidently, for some reason or other, the wish of Fitzosborne that Miss Ridley and his cousin should really become acquainted, and that the introduction should not pass over by his merely pronouncing their names within hearing of each other. He not only presented Constance to Mrs. Morley, but to her little girl too; and the manner in which this latter ceremonial was gone through on the part of Constance went far towards propitiating the favour of the mother.

'I am very glad to make acquaintance with you,' said Constance, holding out her hand to the little girl, 'because I want you to tell me how you like being in a room full of grown-up people, who do nothing to amuse you or themselves except walking about, and now and then saying a few words to each other?'

The child roused herself from her half-sleeping attitude with the air of being greatly delighted by a question that she seemed to think worth answering; she made room for Constance to sit down beside her on the ottoman, and then said, 'I don't wonder at your thinking it must be very dull for me—and so it is. I do get so tired of looking at the ladies' fine gowns and the gentlemen's fine waistcoats. But then, you know, it is a great deal better to be dull with mamma than without her, for every now and then she takes my arm within hers, and gives it a little squeeze, and that is such a comfort! But, to be sure, you know, I had much rather be sitting with her all by my own self, as I used to do in the shady walks at Castellamare last summer.'

'Miss Ridley,' said Fitzosborne, 'I shall be jealous if Mabel sets off full speed thus, chattering to you at your first interview just as fast as she does to me, who am about the oldest friend she has in the world.'

'Yes, you are the oldest friend I have in the world, next mamma,' replied the child, 'and I love you next best, so you need not be jealous, cousin Fitz. But that is no reason, you know, why I should not like talking to such a pleasant-looking person as this, who does not begin by saying "Dear me, what a pretty little girl?" I *am* so tired of hearing people say I am a pretty little girl.'

Mrs. Morley looked at her, smiled languidly, and shook her head. 'Though you are a pleasant-looking person, Miss Ridley, which in Mabel's vocabulary means kind, I fear that you will pass no lenient judgment on me for training my only treasure so very much in the way she should *not* go; but there are reasons for it, which shall be at your service, if you will, when we become better acquainted.'

This speech from Mrs. Morley, and addressed to her insignificant self, astonished Constance beyond measure. Both during the present evening, and that on which she had met her at Lady Dort's, Constance had thought she had discerned, notwithstanding the marked simplicity of her dress, a something that seemed to hover between *hauteur* and impertinence in Mrs. Morley's manner of receiving the compliments of many whom she had seen address her. She appeared to assume the airs of a personage, for some reason or other, apart from and above those around her, and the scraps of her conversation which she had overheard that night had confirmed the impression. But, notwithstanding her surprise, Constance received this unexpected exception in her favour very gracefully, and having felt very greatly interested by the appearance of Mrs. Morley, despite the shade of disapprobation which her peculiarities had produced, she immediately fell into easy and lively conversation with her, in which Penelope, Markham, and Fitzosborne joined.

But though the conversation was general, Mrs. Morley's manner to Constance was particular. It was to her she listened most eagerly, it was to her she addressed herself most frequently, and at length it suddenly occurred to the affianced bride of Mortimer, that it was her engagement to him, already become so marvellously public, which had obtained for her this flattering distinction.

Not many minutes, however, after this idea had suggested itself, she happened to move her head away towards Mabel, who still nestled closely at her side, and who had begun muttering something in her ear; and while thus engaged, she heard Mrs. Morley, in the low, clear whisper, that was so peculiar to her, say to Penelope, 'Is it indeed true that your lovely friend is engaged to marry Henry Mortimer?'

'It is quite true,' replied Penelope.

There was something in the tone in which this question was asked, which startled Constance greatly more than the question itself, and, almost unconsciously, she turned round and looked at the speaker. The expressive countenance of Mrs. Morley was completely overcast; her fair pale brow was knit into a frown, and the dimples round her mouth had given place to a look profoundly melancholy.

'She loves him!' thought Constance, suddenly remembering the marked attention which Mr. Mortimer had shown her. 'Alas! is it possible that he has given her reason to believe that *he* loves her?'

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There was a complication of disagreeable feelings in this idea that made Constance first colour, and then turn pale. Pity for Mrs. Morley—pity and contempt too for herself, and a new-born but instantly full-grown wish that she had never met the captivating poet, to whom she had given her heart with such rash readiness, all pressed upon her, and made her feel exceedingly miserable.

Mr. Fitzosborne's eyes were fixed upon her, and it required the exertion of all his self-control, of which he certainly possessed more than an average share, to enable him to conceal the sensations produced by her evident emotion. Of her eventually discovering that Mortimer was not in any respect (save his power of versifying) the man she believed him to be, he had not the shadow of a doubt, and he trusted that the discovery would be made in time to save many from misery. But that it should have come already, exceeded his most sanguine hopes. Yet how else could he account for the look of misery that had taken possession of her features, upon hearing the question of Mrs. Morley, or the answer of Penelope?

There was, however, in the nature of Fitzosborne, no mixture of the weakness which leads to premature judgment, or the receiving probabilities for facts. He became silent, but *not* abstracted, and watched every indication of feeling in the fair face of Constance, with an intensity of interest which was legible to the eye of Mrs. Morley, although equally unobserved and unsuspected by any one else.

No mixture of cold-hearted indifference respecting the welfare of the few whom she called her friends, made part of the whimsical eccentricity of Mrs. Morley's character. Mr. Fitzosborne ranked first among those whose friendship for herself and her child she believed to be unmixed with any selfish motive whatever, and the consequence was that she did

'. . . . . wear him
In her heart's core, ay, in her heart of hearts.'

Not, however, with any mixture of the feeling which for the most part has something to do, more or less, as the case may be, in all that has concern with the heart of a pretty woman at all on the sunny side of forty. Mrs. Morley was neither in love with Mr. Fitzosborne, nor did she believe that Mr. Fitzosborne was at all in love with her; nevertheless she was deeply, O deeply interested in all that concerned him, and almost tremblingly alive to every circumstance likely to affect his happiness. It had more than once happened that Mr. Fitzosborne had mentioned Constance Ridley to her as a young person in whom he thought she would find it difficult to trace the *minauderies* of which she was wont to complain in most of the young females of her acquaintance, and that unerring tact which prevents most feminine ears from hearing a young man name a young woman, without detecting the nature of the sentiment she has inspired, through all the varieties of admiration, esteem, love, distrust, contempt, and dislike, had taught her to believe, that despite the seemingly limited extent of this negative praise, her friend and kinsman had at length seen a woman whom he was likely to love.

She had, however, subsequently heard, in common with all the world, that this admired Miss Ridley had both captivated and accepted the fastidious Mortimer, and the vision of Fitzosborne's having found a wife vanished from her thoughts. But upon seeing and conversing with Constance, she not only admired her as much as her cousin hoped and expected she would do, but conceived so very strong a wish that Mr. Fitzosborne should, and that Mr. Mortimer should not become her husband, that her own happiness suddenly seemed to hang upon this seemingly improbable change of scenery and decorations.

No wonder, then, that the speaking features of Mrs. Morley puzzled Constance, and set her, in her turn, upon weaving imaginary romances; which made her almost forget the place where she was, and the scene that surrounded her. All this intricate and visionary network, however, was speedily disturbed by the approach of the poet, who unconsciously had so large a share in its construction. Henry Mortimer, as usual, had been receiving the flattering homage of nods, and becks, and wreathed smiles, from all the most distinguished persons in the room, and, as usual, he had so far yielded himself to their gentle fascination, as to think it was no offence to love, though he postponed for a while breathing his adoration into the ear of her who had bound herself to listen to no other. But at length, either satiated by the homage he had received, or stimulated by seeing the admired Fitzosborne at her side, he once again pressed forward to claim the place which was now his by right.

'Come into the music-room,' said he, addressing Constance, and offering his arm with at least as much authority as tenderness. Constance at that moment felt so much pity for Mrs. Morley, that she would have willingly endured the absence of her lover for a while longer, rather than have inflicted the pain which she believed her to feel; but all her conjectures were put to flight, and all her fanciful suspicions immediately cured, by the manner in which that lady now took the arm of Fitzosborne, and the tone in which she said, 'Come, my dear friend!—Je m'embâte ici, nous nous embâteons, n'est pas?—might we not conjugate the verb throughout?' while, on the other hand, Mrs. Morley herself felt disposed to give up her own theory as utterly unfounded, upon hearing Fitzosborne address the party in the gayest and most unembarrassed manner possible, as he delivered the petition of Mrs. Hartley, and supported it by the most flattering pleading possible from himself. Mortimer looked at Constance. He was far, very far from having forgotten the promise he had given; not even Mrs. Hartley herself remembered it more freshly; but he either saw, or fancied he saw, in the aspect of his lady-love a something which he would himself have found it extremely difficult to name, and which, indeed, could hardly be described fitly, except by negatives. She did not look agitated, blushing, and eager at the prospect of the pleasure he had given her reason to hope for. She did not even look animated as Mr. Fitzosborne proceeded to describe Mrs. Hartley's anxiety upon the subject; neither did she look a look, or say a word, that might indi-

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cate to the watchful, scrutinizing lover, a portion of the emotion which he felt certain she must feel, at the idea of witnessing every eye fixed in admiration on the man she loved.

'The young rustic is too proud to show her feelings!' thought he—not for an instant did he conceive it possible that she did not experience the emotions he ascribed to her. 'Such pride may show well, and gracefully, when addressed to others, but to me!—no!—it must not be that the woman I have at once rendered by my notice the admiration of one half of the town, and the envy of the other, should appear the only one who can contemplate the idea of hearing me read my own verses aloud, with indifference!' and thus reasoning, he looked away from her, and replied to Mr. Fitzosborne's entreaties by saying lightly—'Not to-night, Mr. Fitzosborne!—I must intreat you to tell Mrs. Hartley that it is absolutely impossible.'

Though he had turned his head from Constance as he said this, he turned it again, lover-like, to see how she bore it, and to his extreme surprise perceived, beyond all possibility of mistake, that she was extremely well pleased to hear it. Nor did he in this in any degree mistake her. Constance felt deeply, too deeply sometimes, on many subjects; but, like all persons in whom strong feeling is genuine, and not affected, she hated display; and though to have heard the voice of Mortimer give breath to any of the admired compositions she had so lately received from him, would have given a delight of the very highest kind, could she have listened to it alone, or with her friend Penelope only to share the joy, the idea of being *one* in the crowd before whom he was invited to display himself was anything rather than agreeable to her.

'Absolutely impossible?' repeated Fitzosborne, gravely. 'Do not say so, Mr. Mortimer! you are not aware of the pain you will give by this disappointment. I wish you had seen the group of lovely heads that were congregated together listening to Mrs. Hartley, while she spoke of her hope that you would read, as if waiting for their fate. It is impossible you could have resisted the eloquent silence of such pleading.'

'I should certainly be very averse to giving pain instead of pleasure, if I could help it,' replied Mortimer softening: 'but it would be an immense relief to escape it. I wish you would send somebody to tell Mrs. Hartley that it is impossible I should be the first in this business. Will you have the pitying kindness to find such a messenger, Mr. Fitzosborne?'

'I will be the messenger myself,' replied Mr. Fitzosborne, 'if you will permit me to add that you are willing to be the second reader, if she will find a first.'

'Willing!—O no! you must not say that, if you value your veracity. For if I do this thing, it will be most unwillingly.'

'I grieve to hear it! but if not willing, may I say you are ready?' returned Fitzosborne.

'Alas!—Yes! I am doomed, and clearly see that struggling will be in vain.'

With these credentials Mr. Fitzosborne departed, returning again immediately with the assurance that Mrs. Hartley would find some one to read, '*if she knelt for it.*' Mr. Mortimer smiled languidly, and replied, 'She will find no great difficulty. Few men, I believe, are constituted like myself. In many others such a task might appear rather agreeable than otherwise; but to me it is detestable!'

Ere many more words had been bandied among the little party now assembled before the ottoman of Mrs. Morley, who by some means or other had the art of ever making a sort of throne of the seat she selected, inducing most of the men and some few of the women of her acquaintance to linger near her, whenever they approached, and happened not to find her too deeply occupied in tête-à-tête discussion to permit interruption—ere many more sentences had been exchanged among the persons now round her, Caroline Hartley approached them with a very busy and important air.

'Come all of you this moment, good people!' she exclaimed, taking hold of the arm of Constance, in order to enforce her leading the detachment in the direction she wished them to take. 'Mamma begs and entreats that you will all come directly, particularly Mr. Mortimer, to hear something very delightful. You *will* come, Mr. Mortimer, won't you?'

'I am under orders, Miss Caroline Hartley,' he replied, placing himself on the other side of Constance, and securing her arm. 'Go on—I'll follow you.'

Mrs. Morley, Mr. Fitzosborne, and Mabel followed, and Penelope and Markham brought up the rear. On reaching the oval-windowed termination of the second drawing-room, they found Mrs. Hartley in a state of extreme energy, with two footmen attending her orders, about a dozen of peculiarly-intellectual persons round her, who appeared waiting for the result of their operations; and a tall and somewhat red-faced individual standing apart, with two or three small volumes in his hand, watching what was going on with very evident interest, but with an expression of countenance which hovered between the affectation of *haut-ton* indifference and poetical sublimity.

Soon after the arrival of Mrs. Morley and her cortège, the business upon which Mrs. Hartley was engaged appeared to be complete; the tall red-faced gentleman deposited his books upon a small table that had been conveyed to the spot for his service, and then seated himself behind it, so as to face the company, who on their side had the advantage of beholding his substantial features with very satisfactory distinctness, by the aid of a pair of wax-lights, attentively placed, one on each side of him.

'Gracious Heaven, what a bore!' whispered Mortimer to Constance. 'Is it possible, dearest, that your friend Mrs. Hartley can be going to inflict an auto-rythmos from *him* upon us? Do you know him?'

'No, indeed, I do not,' replied Constance. 'Who is he?'

'He calls himself, I am told, "The Sigh, and the Smile," but among ordinary mortals he is known as Mister Wilmot of New York,' returned Mortimer.

'Alas for my ignorance!' exclaimed Constance. 'I am not at all wiser now—I know him not.'

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'Your state is the more gracious—it is a vice to know him,' whispered Mortimer; 'and a vice, too, that brings a pretty severe punishment with it, to those, at least, who love not to be hung alive in chains upon a gallows, vibrating across the Atlantic, for the moral edification of the new-born race on one side, and the meet record of exceeding folly on the other. But hist! Take the chair that has been placed for you, my fairest! and I will endeavour to forget the misery preparing for me, by looking at you.'

Constance obeyed. As many persons as could find either sitting or standing room had already pressed forward to make part of Mr. Wilmot's audience, and that most singularly-favoured gentleman, after looking round him with a vast deal of conscious dignity, trimming first one, and then the other of the wax-lights by passing the point of his pen-knife through the wicks, began the business for which he was placed in the conspicuous situation accorded to him, by opening the largest of the volumes he held.

He cleared his voice, as many men on both sides the Atlantic do clear that organ, unseemly though the process be, and having done so, began as follows.

'*My* audience must not take it ill on *my* part, if I in some degree devi-*ate* from the mode and prac-*tice* established upon these very delightful literary occasions, for the purpose of giving *my* support and testimo-*ny*, *my* vote and interest, as I may call it, to the handsomest picture as ever yet has been made of *my* nation in the article of style and high fashion, which is the point (I am not going to deny it) upon which, one and all, we feel the most share of that noble ambition which is bringing us up so unaccountable high in the scale of universal humanity.'

Having uttered these prefatory remarks, Mr. Wilmot raised to a level with his eyes the volume, labelled as the property of Mr. Hookham, and read as follows:

'She—(it is the heroine of whom the author speaks)—she had been accustomed to see her father and John Effingham moving in the best circles of Europe, respected for their information and independence—undistinguished by their manners—admired for their personal appearance—manly, courteous, and of noble bearing, AND principles, if not set apart from the rest of mankind by an arbitrary rule connected with rank—rich, and possessing all the habits that properly mark refinement—of gentle extraction, of liberal attainments—walking abroad in the dignity of mankind, AND WITH NONE BETWEEN THEM AND THE DEITY.'

Having concluded this exquisite paragraph, Mr. Wilmot closed Mr. Hookham's volume, and looked round him with an air of ineffable satisfaction, and an aspect that seemed to challenge the world in arms to disprove a single circumstance of the evidence which he had brought forward in proof of his own superiority, and that of all his countrymen (of the same colour).

'Does not your author appear to forget, Mr. Wilmot, a certain passage, descriptive of man, which has hitherto been held to be of some authority—that, I mean, in which he is said to be "a little lower than the angels?"' demanded Mr. Fitzosborne with a smile.

'Sir?' responded Mr. Wilmot, with a look of unmitigated contempt.

'Your friend, whoever he may be—for I profess not to recognize his style, appears to assign a higher place in creation to the gentlemen of whom he speaks, than the authority I have quoted accords to the rest of the human race. May I ask of whom your author speaks when he says "there is nothing between them and the Deity?"'

'Of gentlemen of the United States, sir,' responded Mr. Wilmot with becoming dignity.

Mr. Fitzosborne replied by a silent bow to this piece of information, which bow seemed perfectly to satisfy Mr. Wilmot, who, on closing the printed labours of his friend and countryman, opened a little pocket volume filled with manuscripts of his own.

The lines he read were, as usual, about stars, and harps, and tears, and violet-flowers, and no less than eleven middle-aged but very talented girls, who had made way for their persons, or at least for some part of them, within the circle which surrounded the reader, all declared that there was something in Mr. Wilmot's verses, though they could not exactly say what, which went more directly to the heart than those of any other poet they had ever happened to meet with.

'Would you wish me, Constance, to sit down, for the purpose of enchanting Mrs. Hartley's blue ladies after this?' demanded Mortimer in a whisper.

'No,' replied Constance very gently, but very distinctly too.

So Mrs. Hartley's soirée was obliged to fade and die away, without the éclat of Mr. Mortimer's reading. Nevertheless it was voted by very nearly everybody to have been a most delightful evening; and on the whole, Mrs. Hartley retired to rest extremely well contented with her soirée, herself, Mr. Marsh, and May Fair.

EVENING REPOSE.

THE herds are still browsing the hills along,
The birds with each other are vying in song,
Exulting the reaper's heart glows;
But soon comes the Evening—so silent yet bright,
In her train the still and the beautiful Night,
And she sheds over Nature repose—
Repose—Repose,
A sweet and refreshing repose!

The glaciers reflect the Evening's red,
And the valleys are wrapped in their cloudy bed,
And the leaves of the flowers now close;
From alp to alp the glad horns resound,
And the herds descend with joyous bound
To the shadowy vale for repose—
Repose—Repose,
A sweet and refreshing repose!

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And the stars they have mounted their thrones to run
The course prescribed them since time begun,
And they smile upon friends and foes;
And the elves dance around in the moon's pale light,
On the velvet turf—so airy—so bright—
Before they sink to repose—
Repose—Repose,
A sweet and refreshing repose!

N. J. Lucas.

TALES OF THE PUMP ROOM.

INTRODUCTION.

Indebted as are the public generally, and the class of invalids especially, to those works by Dr. Granville, the first of which has swelled by hundreds the pilgrims to those privileged founts of Hygeia, the 'Spas of Germany,' while the more recent and national one exhibits a chivalrous desire to break a lance in favour of the salubrious nymphs of our native England, I am not sure that for myself individually I owe the energetic author aught save a grudge, for the revival, by his latter publication, of the feelings (best gathered from their actual perusal) under which the following unflattering 'pencillings by the spring' were originally drawn forth; or that these will be counteracted, as they in some degree are to myself, in the eyes of a fastidious public, by the strange and therefore veracious narratives to which the joint subjection of four hapless human beings to the characteristic national *peine forte et dure* of the 'Pump' gave rise.

Should the fiend thus evoked prove too potent for the spells by which in our own case his exorcism was effected, the responsibility must be transferred to, or at least shared by, the worthy practitioner, who, by conjuring up (though, be it distinctly understood, by no actual mention of any individual 'Spa' among the minor English haunts of health, if not of pleasure, enumerated in his work) the reminiscences associated with the following tales, has their resuscitation and infliction on the world upon his shoulders.

And now, having already premised (what the experience of all who have lived long in the world will corroborate) that their character of 'true stories' is only rendered more credible by their apparent incredibility, I have only, preparatory to telling 'the tales as they were told to me,' to throw as nearly as possible, by the previous soporific influences of the scene, the reader into my own position of a passive, at least, if not pleased and thankful listener; assuring him for his comfort, that if ever directed in quest of health by Dr. Granville, or doctor anybody, to even the least attractive among the infant 'Spas of England,' it will not be to the precise one where I shiveringly indited, what I yet shiver to look back on, the following description.

Reader! are you at a loss for a precise idea of the import of the word '*Ennui?*'—one originating, by the way, with the people on earth least capable of fathoming its frightful intensity of meaning? If so, I am prepared to furnish you with a definition. Ennui (in England at least) signifies being sent by one's physician, in a state of health not possibly bad enough to alarm oneself, yet negatively enough so to alarm others, to some newly-discovered, half-savage, half-civilized embryo of a fifth or sixth rate watering-place, looking, notwithstanding its hopeless distance from town, *par excellence*, and all other towns worth mentioning, like Paddington and Pentonville, just unpacked, a little damaged, from one of Pickford's vans.

You have its buildings already in your mind's eye; (I wish they would go out of mine;) and now for its moral and physical recommendations. Social as Juan Fernandez—select as New South Wales—picturesque as Pevensea Level—shady as the deserts of Sahara—in facility of access almost rivalling Ascension—in civilisation and culture not far behind St. Kilda. Rural as mud, mire and monotony can make it, and sublime in solitude as Salisbury Plain.

Reader! this is no fabulous paradise. This *rus in urbe* actually exists in the terra incognita of one of our less-known counties, and its chief ornament is, or rather, alas! I should sadly say, was, a stately Pump-room, which, if it did not exactly, like Milton's Pandemonium, 'rise as an exhalation to the sound of flutes and soft recorders,' had about it as little of the vulgar tangible realities of a terrestrial building, and was erected with as little din of chisel and mallet as was consistent with a structure, whose chief component parts were painted wood and tarnished paper.

It was very imposing, nevertheless; and being as yet a 'world too wide' for its devoted victims, it contained, beside the usual scullery-looking fountain, with its gas-like apparatus of pipes and cocks, and its ominous array of tall taper tumblers—(not to mention a priestess, whose nose constant efforts to escape the effluvia had fairly curled back upon itself, like the tail of Lady Penelope Penfeather's pug)—the noble, but, it must be confessed, as yet 'marrowless' skeleton of the Borewell subscription library; consisting, as far as I could gather from daily but not very close inspection, of Reece's Medical Guide, a Chemical Analysis of the Borewell Mineral Waters, Hervey's Meditations, Young's Night Thoughts, and Sherlock on Death; the Letters of Smelfungus, Diary of an Invalid, ditto of an *Ennuyeé*, and the Transactions of the Agricultural and Philosophical Society of Borewell, handsomely presented by themselves. These, with a few dog's-eared romances from the Minerva press, and sundry odd volumes (grievously thumbed) of the Waverly Novels, composed, to the best of my recollection, the *catalogue raisonné* of the literary resources of the Borewell Spa.

For the more active equestrian exercises so conducive to health or convalescence, its facilities consisted in divers deeply-rutted lanes, well calculated for sober motion, and indeed precluding every other; together with some couple of miles of furzy common, (the relics of an exploded rabbit-warren,) with pitfalls frequent enough to arouse the faculties of the most lethargic or comatose patient; not to mention the chances

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of dislocation or fracture, so favourable to the rising reputation of the Borewell surgical practitioner. For pedestrians there were the delightful alternatives of a quarter of a mile of newly-macadamized street, whose adaptation to the cases of his gouty and rheumatic patients Dr. Paradox failed not to point out; of narrow pathways through rank and dripping corn-fields, intersected at every hundred yards by stiles of formidable obliquity; and last, not least, a public garden of such respectable growth and maturity, that gentlemen were prohibited from entering it with spurs, lest they should root up the bushes, or the ladies with flounces, for fear of decapitating the trees.

With these manifold resources within and without doors, during the wettest part of the wet summer of 18—, it will surprise no one to hear that towards the end of my second week's solitary sojourn I had meditated suicide. I had strolled out about half a mile on the London road, for privacy, (it being the least frequented in the parish,) and in quest of a tree capable of sustaining the weight of myself and my miseries, when the sight, the welcome, unexpected sight, of a smart tilbury, with two gentlemen in it, and a mounted servant behind, induced me to suspend, not myself, but my resolution. Touching my hat, with all the remaining alacrity I could muster, to my fellow-martyrs, I gladly turned in their wake, inhaling with absolute delight the cloud of dust created by their unwonted vehicle.

I felt sure of meeting them at dinner; for the public table, at which I had hitherto sat, like Alexander Selkirk,

'Sole monarch of all I surveyed,'

afforded, I knew, the only gastronomical resource of Borewell; nor was its well-nigh despairing hostess (the presiding nymph before mentioned of the spring) likely to allow such distinguished visitors to elude her hospitality.

On entering accordingly, more punctually than usual, the chilly ill-finished *salle à manger*, where fumes from the adjoining kitchen strove but half successfully with vault-like exhalations from the still weeping mortar of the walls, the exhilarating spectacle of three covers realized my sanguine expectations. On two of these welcome plates reposed (a custom borrowed from places of greater resort) a pair of visiting cards, and I read with pleasure the promising titles of Mr. Malcolm of Malcolm's Tower, and Col. Mertoun of his Majesty's ——— Dragoons.

The individuals thus respectably designated soon entered, and confirmed my favourable prognostics. Never was the civil and military character more happily relieved and contrasted than in this pair of friends. Mr. Malcolm was a tall fair man, whose features might almost have been deemed feminine, but for the hardier tint of his complexion, derived evidently from merely exercise in the open air. 'Country gentleman' was written in every line of his open agreeable countenance; yet that such had not been always his vocation, there was something in the flash of his bright blue eye that seemed to testify, and it was less of a surprise than might have been expected, when he ascribed the complaint (obstinate chronic rheumatism) for which he was doomed to his present penance, to literal, not figurative acquaintanceship with the 'frosty Caucasus,' and exposure during more than one adventurous journey to the precarious shelter of a Turcoman tent. To the pursuits of fishing and farming, so congenial to a returned Scotsman, he had now, however, been for some years devoted; and though regretting his forced absence from these, and from a family whom he loved too well to involve them in the discomforts of Borewell, there was about the worthy borderer a cheerful *bonhommie* which bespoke one determined to make the best of existing circumstances, both to himself and his companions in exile.

Colonel Mertoun, again, was a thorough soldier—just the fine martial-looking veteran, bronzed by a thousand climates—of whom the late eventful wars have left us so many a noble specimen. His temperament was evidently less elastic than that of the plain unruffled laird. A man cannot have seen and suffered what soldiers of the last half century have done, without either rising, with true mess-room buoyancy, above the scenes and vicissitudes in which he has been a partaker, or bearing about with him, like the subdued and contemplative Mertoun, a countenance somewhat 'sicklied o'er with the pale cast of thought.'

I pique myself on being a little of a physiognomist, and saw that disappointment—a blight of the heart and affections in early life—had done more than camps and carnage to make Mertoun the pensive but not morose solitary he evidently had remained. There is, however, as Jaques says, 'much matter' in your retired soldier, as well as in abdicated princes; and further acquaintance proved, that in anecdote and adventure our invalid could match with many a more stirring soldado. A gouty affection, of a teasing undecided character, had fallen, as it frequently does, into a wounded limb, and to try to dislodge it he had accompanied his friend Malcolm to Borewell.

Our trio—but I am forgetting that all this time, dear reader, *you* may be wondering who the devil *I*, that thus familiarly address you, am—and I must really put you out of pain by a schedule of my real and personal properties. Imprimis, an old name, that of St. Leger, a tolerable estate, a fair wife, and five children, constitute my exterior appendages. With such inducements to keep within bounds my insatiable thirst for travel, you will probably be disposed to view in the light of poetical justice the penance by which I was now doomed to expiate, with slight chance of their removal, the consequences of boyish daring in a ramble among the Alps.

A-propos of travel. It is seldom that four individuals (for another member was ere long sent by his evil and our good stars to complete our *partie quarrée*) are assembled by chance in one miniature traveller's club, as representatives of nearly the four points of the compass. The east had been, as I have hinted, the chief scene of Malcolm's adventures—for adventures they indeed might really be called—while the West

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Indies and Peninsula occupied the foreground of Colonel Mertoun's military reminiscences. My travels, again, had been chiefly pursued in the southern countries of Europe and Switzerland; while the less voluntary locomotion of Mr. Curzon (an *attaché* from the foreign office, the fourth arrival to whom I have alluded) had been restrained within the limits of the few minor northern courts to which his standing yet permitted him to aspire.

That this divergence in our distinctions produced an agreeable variety in our after-dinner talk, it will not be difficult to imagine. Yet it did not prevent our hailing, in the double capacity of a fresh listener to ours, and delightful though chary narrator of his own specimens, the *beau ideal* of a Protestant clergyman from Ireland; reconciled to the pleasure of revisiting, after long years of exile and seclusion, his native England, to the sadly crippled condition to which the damp climate of his adopted country's western coasts had reduced him. Mr. Travers, indeed, suited us all—harmonizing specially in some point or other of his interesting character with every one of the group. Having in his youth made the grand tour (as tours were then made) with a young British nobleman, he was familiar with the courts, whose gossip formed the stock in trade of the young *attaché;* and if long rural retirement had qualified him to talk of farming and horticulture with the good-natured Malcolm, acquaintance thorough, not superficial, with the classics, made me prick up my ears whenever he spoke of Italy, while a melancholy, deep, philosophical, and gentle, associated him in heart and feeling with the sensitive Mertoun.

But enough of us, and our personal qualities. It is our stories with which you, dear reader, have to do; and how these ever came to see the light (a proper bonfire it was!) it is time I should make you aware.

Every watering-place, it is well known, has its doctor, alias dictator, from the renowned and omnipotent J—, of L——, to the obscure and as yet fameless Paradox of Borewell. It was the decree of the latter, infallible as those of the Medes and Persians, that at the end of a month's course of the waters, patients should intermit their cure, and they then enjoyed the liberty (a dangerous one I should opine in many cases for the Spa) of varying, by a short excursion in the vicinity, the monotony of their Hygeian *sejour*.

This permission three members of our fraternity (the *attaché* was obliged to devote *his* holiday to a run up to town) had not virtue to resist; though the helpless condition of poor Malcolm, now immovably chained to the spot by the debility which had succeeded his ejected pains, might have prompted to self-immolation, for his sake, any but residents of a month's standing at Borewell. We quieted our consciences, however, and consoled our friend by the prospect of the accession of ideas with which our little trip would enrich our remaining durance; and set off, exhilarated like any schoolboys on the eve of the holidays, on our week's ramble. Malcolm, with his usual good nature, bade us never mind him, as he had in view, during our absence, a resource to which nothing short of such a salutary extremity could have driven him.

On this oracular response we pondered at intervals during our excursion; at the end of which our speculations were set at rest by seeing, on entering the Pump-room, our greatly recruited friend seated in his wonted arm-chair at the round library table, [our habitual lounge,] with a reasonably thick quire of paper before him, most of it scribbled over in a fair but somewhat feminine hand.

'You are already aware,' answered he to our simultaneous ejaculations on this unexpected discovery of authorship, 'that I have been a wanderer in Wallachia; and in one of my brief sojourns in its then barbarous, but they tell me now fast humanizing capital, there occurred an incident so romantic in itself, and fraught with such tragic consequences to one of the loveliest creatures whom fate ever sent to waste her sweetness in a Sclavonian swamp, that I have been bothered, ever since I can remember, by my wife and girls, to put it on paper for them; the journal in which I had noted it down at the time (for to keeping one, I fear, I must not, in the face of printed evidence, refuse to plead guilty) having gone to choke the fishes, if fish there be in one of their slow muddy sluggish streams, about as like my native Tweed as the black bog they issue from to the green braes of Yarrow. The task, thanks to this Bastile of ours, is nearly concluded, and I can't say it has, on the whole, been a disagreeable one, so many are the scenes it has revived and made flit before me. I really can hardly persuade myself you have been a week gone.'

'You'll lend us this tempting-looking MS. after dinner, won't you?' said Mertoun, in his most insinuating manner, to his friend.

'I'll see you hanged first,' replied Malcolm, in a tone strangely at variance with the threat, 'unless you all equally commit yourselves by a similar piece of folly. I don't insist on your writing your *own* stories. Some of you, God bless you! have perhaps, like the king's grinder, "none to tell;" and others would require a folio. But some choice bit of sentiment or adventure, stumbled on in your path through life, I insist on, if ever you are to know one word of the Moldavian mystery, (worth knowing, perhaps, as times go, though I say it that should not,) contained in that bunch of well-blotted foolscap.'

This playful proposal was met, of course, with all the variety of negatives which laziness, modesty, or incapacity, could suggest. But there are sons as well as daughters of Eve inheriting her propensities; and curiosity finally triumphed; a conquest much accelerated by a course of almost tropical rains, and the determination of Malcolm to starve us into compliance, by an absolute refusal to talk, and silent devotion to his own unfinished MS.

Round the Pump-room table there did we all at last congregate, pen in hand, during some three or four dreary diluvial days; inditing what you, dear reader, are now to peruse, but which never would have met your eye, but for a consummation equally unexpected and undesired.

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Among the qualities incident to one of our party, (from delicacy and compassion I abstain from saying which,) was incurable absence. Remaining one night late in the Pump-room to put the finishing stroke to his MS., he forgot, in the exultation of success, to put the extinguisher on the candles. Before daybreak all was confusion and consternation in Borewell. Flames illumined its wooden walls, and threatened destruction to its pasteboard palaces. Engines could not reach it in half a century—water, though a staple and a drug, was inacce sible save in tumblers—and the Pump-room, the glory of the infant commonwealth, lay ere long a heap of smouldering ashes!

I shall not soon forget the face of its owner, as in the triply outraged capacity of proprietor, hotel-keeper, and librarian, he stood at dead of night, bewailing like Othello, his tarnished fame, and 'occupation gone!'

'Come, come, friend,' said the easy-tempered, easy-circumstanced Malcolm, 'there's nothing for your case but a subscription. We have done the mischief, and it is fair we should pay for it. Here goes my name for 50*l.* or 100*l.* if you require it.' 'And mine,' 'And mine,' said three of us, according to our several ability; while the chief culprit seemed tacitly to consider himself liable for whatever should prove deficient in the amount.

'I'm insured for a trifle, gentlemen,' said the landlord, revived by such unwonted liberality, 'and your honours' goodness will go far. But,' eyeing with a professional glance the pile of MS. lying unheeded on Malcolm's table, 'if you would just please to throw in them papers that did the mischief, I'd engage the printing of them would make a man of me again. There's a great call for gentlefolks' writings now-a-days; the place, at any rate, would be known and talked about—and 'twould be droll if what burnt should rebuild the Pump-room!'

'Well, well!' said Malcolm, with his wonted ease, 'I don't care for my part, if the rest are agreeable. Though there's treason in my history, 'tis none of my own committing; and you, gentlemen, have too little concern in yours, to feel sore on the matter. Here, friend,' (tying up the MS. and writing on the huge envelope.) 'I'll throw you a title into the bargain, "TALES OF THE PUMP-ROOM."'

No. I.

THE CLERGYMAN'S STORY.

I KNOW not how to convey to those acquainted alone with the security, the almost holy tranquillity of the *home* feelings of our happy England, an idea of the utter desolateness, heightened by a sense of hourly and invisible dangers, of a Protestant pastor's solitary fireside in the wilds of Ireland, in the year 18—. Nothing save a trust in Providence, unfaltering as a higher power could alone inspire, could have enabled a lone invalid, of weak health and uncertain spirits, to endure, during the long nights of their fearful winter, the consciousness of being the mark for the rancorous hostility of a rabid rival sect, and the too easily excitable violence of their reckless satellites.

In the exercise of commanded duty, however, the soldier of the Gospel must ever feel adequately strengthened; and to visit the sick, or comfort the dying of my small and straggling flock—even under cloud of night, when murder stalked abroad beneath forms of peculiar atrocity—seemed light in comparison with sitting powerless at a lowly hearth, awaiting the sudden crash of the stone or whiz of the bullet from the single assassin, or the fierce shout and savage burst of numbers too overwhelming for resistance, into the undefended parsonage.

One only cause of thankfulness, then, mitigated to myself the horrors of those interminable evenings—the thought that to none dearer was life embittered by those undefined expectations of evil; that no agonized wife or shrieking daughter would throw herself in vain between beings maddened into frenzy, and the destined objects of others' vengeance, or be haunted to a premature grave by visions of deeds too hellish for cannibal ferocity. If I perished, it would be alone, and unmourned; except by distant loved ones, estrangement from whom had hitherto formed the melancholy drawback on my Irish preferment.

Transplanted from a curacy in my native England, in the suite of a bishop with whom I was connected—not all the promises of further advancement opened to me by his friendly patronage had altogether reconciled me (even in less troublesome times) to my narrow sphere of almost nominal duties, and the isolation it involved from all that can endear life to social and civilized man.

To the latter evil an alleviation seemed to be held out by the settlement, in a not very distant parish, of another English incumbent, a man, too, of birth and family; even more likely than myself to seek solace under banishment from congenial intercourse. But the exile from his native land and high connections, which Lascelles rather resented than deplored—was occasioned (as I soon learned) by his own pride and impracticability; if not by features in his early career too decidedly unclerical to be smoothed over nearer home. While rustication in a remote parish of the south-west of Ireland was held out to him as a temporary measure, to lead in due time to a provision in the sister church more consonant to the ambitious views with which alone, alas! he had entered it—the proud spirit of the scion of nobility had submitted, as best it might, to the consequences of his own indiscretion. But when years rolled on, and being 'out of sight' of his powerful friends led to its proverbial result of being 'out of mind' also—disappointment, acting on a character naturally harsh and gloomy, would have subsided into utter moroseness, but for an incident so romantic in its nature and effects, as to soften and turn for a time into a new channel the current of his chafed and perturbed feelings.

Some twenty years before the ominous one I have been alluding to, (and my unsocial neigh-

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bour was my senior by nearly that period,) the monotony of his existence in his still wilder maritime parish had been invaded, not by a simple shipwreck—that, alas! was matter of frequent occurrence on a rude and dangerous coast—but the total loss (with one sole and interesting exception) of everything animate and inanimate on board a large and richly freighted West Indiaman.

Driven out of their course for Bristol by a gale of unprecedented fury, a whole convoy of homeward-bound transports and merchant vessels struck on a reef of sunken rocks, stretching out from the cost off W——; one transport, with two hundred men and officers on board, sinking within fifty yards of the shore, whence assistance was unhappily impracticable; while, alas for the honour of humanity! of the few still breathing bodies cast up on the beach, some were suffered to be swept out again, in the hellish anxiety for plunder which pervaded the wild population of a half savage district. One officer, happily rescued by the exertions of Mr. Lascelles, was thus deliberately abandoned by a miscreant, to grasp in his stead a chest which promised to be valuable.

Three vessels thus went to pieces in an hour, within a couple of miles of each other. Out of one, only three lives were saved; out of another, ten; but from the third, the merchantman, which, deeply laden, had struck most heavily, one human being alone, and that a delicate young female, was most singularly preserved. This poor girl, a returning planter's daughter of about fifteen, was in bed, like the other women on board, when the ship struck and went to pieces, but was miraculously carried through a porthole, and thrown on shore, in her nightdress, grievously bruised. She too had been again swept out by the reeling waves, and must have infallibly perished, had not Lascelles, already half exhausted by his exertions in rescuing the officer, dashed gallantly once more into the foaming billows, and brought out, with no small difficulty, his insensible prize. She was conveyed to the shelter of the nearest hovel, where insensibility being succeeded by fever and delirium, the poor young creature long hovered between death and life; returning recollection only serving to add to her bodily sufferings the acutest distress from her forlorn and orphan condition.

It was weeks before the rector's old housekeeper, who had been sent to attend the patient under the roof from whence she could not bear removal, was able to elicit from her despairing charge anything beyond exclamations of passionate regret for the loss of her father and the old black nurse of her infancy, who had perished in the ship; and who seemed to comprise all of earthly friends she either knew or remembered. Her father, from his name, had been a Spaniard, but married to an English woman (her mother) long since dead; and was availing himself, it by degrees transpired, of the late cession of the island to the power of England, and the return of her troops engaged in the capture, to remove himself and his effects to the country of his late wife; to whose relatives, if any survived, he had intended consigning his daughter for the completion of her education; thus fulfilling the last wish of a parent, whom poor Estella remembered only as a pretty pale fair lady, lying always on a couch, and seldom able to do more than, at rare intervals, to kiss, and bless, and weep over her child.

It was in vain that first the housekeeper, and then her master, when the gradual recovery of the poor young creature permitted him to reap the reward of his exertions, sought to tax recollection for this beloved parent's maiden name. She had either never heard, or in the bewilderment of such danger and bereavement, totally forgotten it; and her father's, that of Certaldes, was too common in his own country, as well as unknown to all in England, to render discovery through that channel at all likely. Papers and property there had no doubt been in abundance on board to solve the mystery, had any been washed ashore amid the spoils of the insatiable wreckers, male and female, by whom, shocking to relate, no less than two hundred and seventy-five dead bodies were, first to last, stripped and consigned to a nameless grave. But though the strictest inquiries, assisted by offers of reward, were instituted among the plunderers by the rector, for any property belonging to the late Senor Certaldes, and in particular for a writing-case of some curious native wood, in which Estella remembered her mother's picture and all his most precious papers were kept—no clue was in the course of many months elicited; though the opportune recovery, at no small cost to her protector, of a chest of wearing apparel belonging to the young lady, at one time gave hopes of further restoration.

Correspondence with Trinidad now held out the only obvious remaining chance either of throwing light on Estella's maternal connections, or establishing her claim to such property as her father might have left behind him on the island. But the Spanish agents there, with whose names intimacy had rendered the poor girl familiar, it was found had left for Spain on the English occupation; and when, after the lapse of months, other channels of information were successfully explored, the dilatory character of Spanish functionaries, their natural distrust, under existing circumstances, of transactions with England, and the apparent impunity with which, if any property did exist, it might be withheld by chicane from a minor indebted to the charity of strangers for an asylum and subsistence, soon wearied out the reluctant efforts of the proud, unmercenary, and already enamoured Lascelles.

To live long in a country desert in his eyes as Prospero's island, in daily intercourse with a being as lovely and unsophisticated as Miranda herself, and a thousand times more impassioned; a being, too, snatched from a watery grave by an impulse of humanity felt by one, not unconscious of many faults, as a redeeming trait of his erring life, without reciprocating an innocent attachment for the first man younger than her father, with whom strict Spanish seclusion had allowed her to come in contact, was not a thing to be expected in a person of less fiery temperament, and energetic, though perverted character, than Philip Lascelles. And it having soon

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become,—as soon, indeed, as her restored health and amended spirits rendered possible,—his avowed hope to anchor by indissoluble ties the rescued maiden to the shores on which she had, as if for the special purpose of cheering his solitude, been cast, he became no less anxious to do so ere the authority of relatives might interpose obstacles, or the discovery of an inheritance (on which, to do him justice, he never speculated) throw suspicion on his disinterested devotion to the planter's penniless daughter.

With a view to obviate, however, in either case, all future suspicion of undue advantage having been taken of her youthful inexperience or destitute condition. he requested and obtained for his *protegée* a few months' asylum in the house of my predecessor, the then incumbent of Q., a worthy old man, with a partner of equal kindness of heart, by whom the orphan was received with open arms, cherished during her stay as a daughter, and initiated far more deeply than to her too secular and worldly-minded lover might have been possible, in the precepts of that purer religion it had been her mother's dying wish her daughter should be sent to England to imbibe.

The task was not a difficult one. The pupil was abundantly docile, and the faith of her mother and benefactor came doubly recommended to a mind from which blended Catholic and negro superstitions quickly faded, as shadows flit before the presence of the sun.

So completely indeed had the bewitching creature, in whom the warm affections and keen sensibilities of the south were tempered by much of her maternal country's retiring gentleness, won on the hearts of the good couple at the vicarage, that it was not without misgivings they could venture at length, on the day which made Estella seventeen. to consign the happiness of such a being to the somewhat precarious keeping of a man, of whom intimacy, even in the proverbially delusive character of a lover, had certainly not given them a satisfactory impression.

That he was eminently handsome, and could be equally agreeable, they were at times as disposed as their young guest to admit. But there lurked in the cast of his fine aristocratic features a harsh and cynical expression ; and across his temper, in his happiest and most urbane moments, the slightest contradiction sufficed to throw a moody veil, which augured ill for the future peace of mind even of one by whom his will was little likely to be disputed. Towards his own almost nominal flock he was known to be cold and indifferent; while, by his austere and unconciliatory deportment, the Catholic population, among whom it was his fate to live, were needlessly estranged. So much of pride and harshness was there indeed in his most praiseworthy actions, that even with a people so readily propitiated as the Irish, his deeds of personal gallantry during the shipwreck failed to earn him the praise of courage, while the attempts to check outrage and pillage which, more mildly exercised, might have reclaimed, or at least shamed the offenders, were secretly and bitterly resented, and gave birth to projects of future revenge.

The hints of his widely differing and truly Christian brother incumbent, how greatly an opposite line of conduct would promote his own comfort and usefulness, and still more, that of one whose happiness ought henceforth to be dearer than his own, were coldly and distastefully received ; and though Estella, radiant in tears as in smiles, saw, in the act which made her irrevocably his, only the one passing cloud of temporary separation from her parental friends at Q—, more prescient eyes and hearts foresaw for their estranged darling either a life of storms and darkness, or the refuge from it of an early grave.

They were, in the first instance, happily disappointed ; so soothingly for a time did the charms and sweetness of his young bride act on the character of Lascelles, and so completely did the having something to love seem to have reconciled him with himself and with mankind, that even the vicar and his wife had ceased to prognosticate evil, save from the presence of a felicity too bright and passionate—experience had taught the hoary-headed—for continuance here below. It found, ere long, its earthly termination—not as they had apprehended, and as appearances rendered too probable—in the diminished affection or faulty character of the husband, but in the removal, while the torch of love yet burned with unabated intensity, of the sole object by whom perhaps that wayward husband might have been, though at the expense of much mercifully-spared suffering, ultimately reclaimed.

Little more than a year after the pastor of Q— had performed for his brother of the cloth the office of uniting him with the object of his doting attachment, it was his sad task to consign to the tomb her inanimate remains, and to baptize, in tears of doubly painful sorrow, the image of herself she had left to console and chain to life her despairing survivor. 'Take her away!' was his frantic exclamation. as the babe was held up for the kiss of benediction at the close of a rite from which the rebellious heart of Lascelles shrank in loathing ; 'Let me not see her till I can forget and forgive all she has cost me!'

It needed no second bidding to make the good clergyman's wife take to her house and bosom the little fragile being so rudely welcomed into the world by one who ere long would, she thought, be but too thankful to reclaim, with softened feelings, this legacy of love. In vain, however, when the meeting, long deferred, was at length insisted on, did the kind couple look for the gentle and hallowed overflowings of natural tenderness at sight of a creature, whose resemblance to her mother formed, in their eyes, her most resistless charm. In the father's, it only seemed to arouse with fresh pangs a grief which, moody, turbulent, and unused to control as him by whom it was indulged, only exchanged the fury of the whirlwind for the sullen calm by which fresh tempests are ushered in. His intercourse with mankind had for years been limited enough—too limited for cherishing in his bosom the wholesome feelings of humanity. From this he now altogether withdrew; leaving it almost as much a matter of conscience as of compassion

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with his pitying neighbours at the vicarage, to rescue from neglect and possible unkindness the little girl, whom, unable to extort from him even a wish on the subject, they had named after her mother, Estella.

For many a long year did this philanthropic adoption prove, like other virtuous actions, its own best reward; first, in the smiles and cheerful prattle of a beautiful infant; and then, as reason dawned and her mind expanded, in the warm returns of affection, called forth by more than parental tenderness, on the part of a lovely girl. Alas! for her, that this should have formed, as was natural, perhaps, from her worse than orphan condition, and the declining years, verging on dotage, of her benefactors—the ruling if not sole feature in their conduct towards one destined in after life to exchange it for the most trying vicissitudes of domestic harshness. What in Mrs. S., while she lived, had been simple indulgence, degenerated on the part of her superannuated husband and his old housekeeper, into absolute spoiling; and as death removed from the poor girl the last fond nominal guardian of her youth, the keen high temper and headlong impetuosity of character she unhappily inherited from her father had been fostered into a strength from which old Kathleen often shrank appalled, and with which she was incapable of contending.

To this frail and inadequate guardianship, it was, however, poor Estella's fate to be consigned. For, at the period of her protector's death, Lascelles was, for the first time during a fifteen years' banishment, on a visit to England; restored by the death of an elder brother, and the precarious health of the next in succession, to some share of importance in the family whose pride his early misconduct had wounded, and who now condescended to remember that in the wilds of Ireland they had a relative immured.

Agreeably surprised to see that the rustication of half a lifetime had left the recluse aristocratic and exclusive as when he first quitted the high society of his privileged college, they never inquired whether his narrow sphere of duties had been adequately, or even tolerably fulfilled. 'Thank heaven he has no brogue, no low Irish habits!' ejaculated his fashionable spinster sisters. 'What a blessing there are no dowdy wife or children!' responded his highly-married ones. Of his marriage, a rumour had reached them; but the wife, a Spaniard, and no doubt a Catholic, was happily dead; and his 'wild Irish girl of a daughter, about whom he seemed to care little and know less, could either be polished up at a fashionable boarding-school into something presentable, or left in Ireland out of sight to marry some neighbouring clergyman, or settle down into the wife of her father's curate.

They little thought how nearly their random speculations were on the brink of being realized. On the plea of family affairs of importance, Lascelles' leave of absence from Ireland was indefinitely prolonged. A curate became of course necessary, and one was appointed by the bishop most likely, by his zeal and energy, to make up to the little neglected flock for the coldness of the willing absentee. To the recommendation, in the eyes of all the females in the parish, of being extremely young and handsome, he added—in those of the sole person in it for whose opinion he was likely to care—that of being the only attractive or cultivated individual, of corresponding age to her own, with whom she had ever been thrown into contact. Not her poor mother, when cast an orphan at sixteen on the rocky shores of W—, had less knowledge of mankind, or had lived in more utter estrangement from congenial associations, than Estella at the same age, after a lifetime passed in the secluded vicarage of Q——.

Is it a wonder, then, if Lascelles—cold, austere, and unprepossessing as was his fine regal countenance—had appeared to the Spanish maiden a being of superior order—Charles Denovan, the nobleness of whose exquisite features was tempered by a mildness allied alike to his character and calling—should assume in her daughter's eyes somewhat of superhuman perfection? If the mother had loved, nay, idolized the man to whom she owed her life—the child soon actually worshipped, with adoration more perilous though more pardonable, the pastor who realized all that her early associations had shadowed forth of the *beau idéal* of piety, while his society served at once to make her feel the deficiencies of an imperfect education, and insensibly to repair and compensate them.

For months, ay, almost for two years, did their intercourse continue, with as little of restraint as the important and scarcely exerted guardianship of old Kathleen could impose on her wilful charge. Part of it was passed with her nursling under the roof of the long vacant vicarage of Q——; the alternate duties of which afforded the young curate abundant opportunities of enjoying the sole relaxation the neighbourhood afforded, in the society of its inmates; nor, when they of necessity removed to the equally deserted glebe-house of X—, was there any one in the rude adjoining hamlet entitled or inclined to find fault, if the cruel rector's pretty and neglected daughter sought and found consolation in the good new curate's frequent visits.

That these were devoted to the laudable and grateful task of imparting to her ill-stored mind some share of the instruction with which his own well-regulated one teemed, formed to Denovan himself the motive and excuse for an intercourse, the very fascinations of which might otherwise have awakened his doubts as to its propriety. But to surprise her high-born father with his child's rapid progress in cultivation and accomplishment—to lure him, by this added charm, to tardy acknowledgment of her claim on his affections—to insinuate, through the medium of her influence, the religious spirit in which he was so wofully deficient—and then to receive, perchance, (this was in truth but a faint and trembling hope, forming little if any drawback on the disinterestedness of the pursuit,) the reward of all his solicitudes in the hand of the being he had contributed to embellish for earth, and train for heaven, seemed a design so blameless in conception, and delightful in execution, that an older man than the young ardent Irish curate might have been pardoned for luxuriating in its anticipation.

Engrossed, meanwhile, as Lascelles had be-

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come by ambitious projects (long dormant, but never suppressed) of church preferment and aggrandizement in England—it is possible he might have viewed with indifference, or even ratified with contemptuous sanction, his daughter's humble choice of happiness, had that daughter s beauty been one degree less dazzling, or the efforts of her preceptor to array it in a garb of corresponding cultivation been less fatally successful. Had Estella continued, in appearance and manners, the wild, half Spanish, half Irish child of impulse and passion, which, in fact, after all love's diligence, events proved her to have intrinsically remained, not even her glorious flashing eyes, slight springy southern figure, or that Andalusian grace, restrained by none of the timidity by which her mother's more subdued fascinations of mind and person were veiled, would have induced her fastidious father to produce her among his English relatives.

But night and day had the infatuated Denovan sat forging the golden chain by which his idol was to be fettered to the car of pride; and well might his heart and his hopes die within him, when detecting, even amid the first emotions of a meeting in which the father triumphed for a moment over the man, the sparkle of gratified vanity in the eye, that he fondly hoped would have overflowed with long repressed tears of parental love.

It was, in truth, a strange and almost fearful relation in which they stood—that long-estranged father and child! At one moment, Lascelles, all stoical as he was, could have snatched his daughter to his heart, for that resemblance to her mother, for which, at other times, as a memento of buried felicity, he almost felt towards her, his infant, an unnatural loathing. At one time he would hate himself for his long causeless banishment of an unoffending child; and then, something prophetic within would seem to whisper that from his very crime would spring its merited punishment

Estella, again, to whom no one memory of infantine endearment or token of early affection had hallowed the name of 'Father,' felt towards the cold, supercilious being thus designated, far more of awe than love. And soon—as his brief show of tenderness subsided into natural apathy—as by degrees his ambitious views for herself began to develope themselves, and, above all, as his conduct towards Denovan assumed in her eyes the character of an outrage at once on gratitude and love—the vague notions of filial duty which had so long floated around her fancy, rather than taken root in her heart, gave place to a wild, reckless determination to seek refuge from being the puppet of his ambition, in the fulfilment of her own destiny in the humbler path of happiness she had chosen for herself.

Impetuous, however, and at the same time determined, as subsequent events showed her character, under the influence of unlimited indulgence from childhood, to have become, she had remaining duty and discretion to unfold in her gentlest manner, and in his happiest supposed mood, to her father her own views for life, and the wishes of the too modest and now absent Denovan. She little dreamed, however, at what a critical and fatal moment a revelation, to which he was indeed, from rumour, no stranger, had been made to her ambitious parent. She found him in his study, absorbed in the contemplation of a once elegant, but now defaced and worm-eaten *escritoire*. Before him lay a picture, and letters, yellow, time-worn, and defaced; and beside them rolls of parchment, with seals of foreign wax appended. He started angrily as she entered, but, soothed apparently by the subject of his previous contemplations, drew her more affectionately than usual towards him, and showing her the miniature, said, 'There, Estella, is your long-missing English grandmother's picture. May you resemble *her* in fate and fortunes, as you do one still dearer in outward form and feature!'

'It was of my "fate and fortunes" I came to speak to you just now, dear father,' replied Estella, hailing as glad omens his rarely flushed cheek and moistened eye. 'If you are pleased with me, as you said when we first met, it is all due to an excellent person whom you can never reward enough, and who will only be rewarded in one way, which he is too shy to ask for himself. Will you give your daughter's hand, where her heart is already, to Charles Denovan, and then her 'fortunes" on earth, and "fate" for eternity, will be as secure as parent's love can wish, or care of man can make them?'

Had Mr. Lascelles indeed heard for the first, instead of the fiftieth time, that the curate loved his daughter, and that the affection was mutual, he could not have 'looked' more 'unutterable things' on the occasion. His at all times tremendous figure dilated, his large eyes flashed with scorn as he exclaimed, 'Degenerate girl, before you throw yourself away with my consent, on that presumptuous beggar, I would see you in your coffin, or married to the veriest outcast this land of ruffians bears upon its bosom!'

For a moment the high spirit of the daughter quailed before this wholly unforeseen depth of parental anathema; in the next it rallied. 'You may deny me your consent, father,' muttered the undaunted girl, in accents thick with suppressed emotion; 'but either Charles Denovan shall be my husband, or the "outcast" you give your child for an alternative, shall make you rue that you ever withheld it.' Appalled in his turn by the tone as well as substance of this strange reply, Lascelles turned round to look at his daughter. She was pale and rigid as a marble statue—he thought of her mother in her coffin, and wished he had not used the ominous word.

Nothing more passed between them on the forbidden subject. Estella, emancipated, as she conceived, from parental control by her explicit declaration, wrote unreservedly to the absent Denovan; who—true to the principles of honour and delicacy (now more than ever consolatory to him) which had induced him to decline entangling her by any engagement, or even any direct avowal of his too obvious sentiments—forbore, at the expense of some self-denial, to reply to expressions so flattering to an absent lover's heart. He had ere long reason doubly to applaud the line

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he had so conscientiously taken, when a letter of a very different tenour, from Mr. Lascelles, for ever annihilated the hopes of the humble curate, by informing him that by the death-bed confession of an Irish crone, who, in revenge for his defrauding her of some cherished spoil in the shipwreck, had for twenty years withheld from him his father-in-law's fished-up writing desk, his daughter was likely to become, in right of her Spanish grandfather, a considerable heiress—and from the recently-discovered connexions of her English grandmother, entitled to mingle with the highest of that aristocracy, among whom he himself was about to resume his proper place. This information (of which his daughter was continued purposely ignorant) was communicated by him to Mr. Denovan, to be acted upon as the sentiments of honour and principle laid claim to, and he believed possessed by that gentleman, would naturally dictate. If for base mercenary views he could subject a daughter to parental malediction and personal degradation, his course was open; but if, as he was willing to hope he was, incapable of conduct so injurious to her for whom he professed a disinterested attachment—there was, for the evils a father so justly deprecated, but one remedy—his own speedy union with another object.

The keen eye of Lascelles had, during their short intercourse, fathomed precisely the depths and shallows of his late curate's character. By wooing to his arms—at the expense, if necessary, of her father's abjured riches and insane pride—the fragile and wayward Estella, he would have but consulted her happiness in this world and the next; and perhaps lent stability to virtues, the germ of which he had scarcely had time to deposit, ere her bosom, in the torrent of passion, swept them resistlessly away. But piqued on the tender ground of honour and principle, shrinking from the character of an abettor of filial impiety, too unselfish to contemplate for a moment a personal gratification acquired by impoverishing and degrading the object of his youthful idolatry, Charles unhesitatingly adopted the alternative of self-sacrifice placed before him by Mr. Lascelles: and by offering his hand within three months to a cousin in a deep decline—whose passage to the tomb would, he knew, be smoothed by this proof of esteem, if not of a warmer sentiment—he enabled the triumphant father to set at rest the anxieties which had, for weeks past, been evidently, though silently, preying on his daughter's mind, by carelessly announcing at breakfast from the newspaper—'So! our late curate has done the wise and proper thing, and married a woman in his own sphere of life! I wish him joy of coming to his senses, and hope you will now come to yours.'

There was more danger at present of their forsaking her, and life with them; for pale and rigid as she had become when her father's decision against the union had been made known to her, it was with an eye more fixed, and a cheek and lip more bloodless still, that she heard of her lover's infidelity. 'You have done this, father,' gasped she once more, in the same hoarse, unearthly whisper—'somehow or other, you may have brought it about; and now, O God, you have left me only my part of the work to do!' Once more the tyrant father quaked before his daughter's wild aspect, and the yet wilder words by which it was accompanied.

Long interrupted by illness on one side, and the awkwardness of detected intrigue on the other, the intercourse between the unhappy parent and child, when at length renewed, forced and unnatural as it necessarily was, became henceforth mingled with a strange touch of mutual forbearance. Lascelles felt that he had practised away the happiness of his daughter with a man 'worth all his tribe'—that, ignorant as she still remained of the motives of his apparent desertion, her feelings, as well as hopes, must have received a cruel blow, and he would have been a worse father than even temper and selfishness had made him, could he have looked wholly unmoved on the havoc he had made. Compassion was in him simple humanity—the recoil of nature from the sufferings of the worm we tread on. But why his poor victim, while she shrank from his caresses with unconquerable aversion, should yet cast towards him looks of occasional pity not unallied to tenderness, could only be accounted for by the relentings of filial instinct, if not affection, from the meditated infliction of some dreadful blow.

This continued, till a letter under cover to old Kathleen, (a former one, enclosed with the straightforwardness of innocence to her father, the pusillanimity of guilt had induced him to suppress,) of congratulation from her injured lover on the brighter prospects under the influence of which he had been induced to withdraw his now presumptuous claims, turned once more the tide of poor Estella's impetuous feelings into an unfilial and fatal channel.

'An heiress, am I?' exclaimed she bitterly; 'my father little thinks whom the independence he deemed poor Charles too low-born to share, will ere long go to enrich. "Rather the veriest outcast upon earth," was his alternative. He has yet to see that it can be mine!'

It was now the dark and dreary month of December, (dark and dreary in a peculiar manner on the black shores of W—,) long before which Lascelles had hoped to transplant himself and his daughter to a more congenial sphere. But difficulties and obstacles in the way of a successor to whom it was expedient in person to deliver up the parish and personage, combined, with a superstitious desire to pass on the spot of her rescue the dismal Christmas-eve of his lost wife's shipwreck, to retard the departure of Mr. Lascelles. Much of his daughter's time was in the interval passed at old Kathleen's—now established in a cottage of the hamlet at the fireside of a widowed daughter—left (like Wordsworth's Betty Foy) the doting mother of an idiot boy.

For this lad the sympathies of Estella had, in her own happier days, often been called forth—as well by his palpable, but in no respect disgusting deficiencies of intellect, as by the handsome though 'lack-lustre' countenance and a devotion towards herself, as 'granny's pretty lady,' which made a smile, or token of approbation, from her a subject of pride and fondness for days together.

'If I am to marry an outcast, as my father

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wished,' harped the unhappy girl, with a superstition which had in it somewhat of the wildness of incipient insanity—'it shall at least be a harmless one! one that I can shield from evil and gladden with a smile, and please with a toy! just enough too of a husband to save *me* from being made a toy for my proud father's ambition to sport with! Denovan can never be jealous of *him*,' added she with a smile, 'any more than I am of his poor sickly cousin whom they tell me he married to save her life, and leave me at liberty. But O, Charles, Charles!' she would exclaim, 'I fear you will repent having done it, when you hear what *I* must yet do before I can fulfil my part of the bargain!'

And truly did she judge the heart of one to whom her immortal part had ever been the most truly dear, when imagining that the pang of losing her would be light to that of hearing of the recantation of their mutual faith, by which she was obliged to ensure the legality of the suicidal act she had so long, with the perverted ingenuity of despair, been meditating. The early lessons of Kathleen, (herself the unwilling resident of years beneath a heretical roof,) and the idea of its being the ancestral creed of her Spanish forefathers, one but too congenial to her own superstitious nature—combined with the distrust towards Protestantism which the want of principle in her father, and of firmness in her lover, had tended to foster in her mind, reconciled Estella to an abjuration which alone would enable an unscrupulous popish priest to unite, without fear of legal consequences, her fate to that of the moon-struck Michael.

It is painful to dwell on a part of a *true story* which one would fain leave shrouded for ever in its own impenetrable veil of mystery. Suffice it, that on Christmas eve, 18—, at the hour when her father had once in reality, and now again in imagination, buffeted the waves for her mother's life—her infatuated child, to inflict a pang on an unnatural parent, plunged herself soul and body into an abyss of woe to which the depths of the raging ocean were as nothing.

The proud parish priest, whom Lascelles had uniformly braved and defied, instead of conciliating—though he shrank from himself performing the obnoxious rite—was not loath to procure a willing substitute in an irresponsible stranger; and mad Michael, in presence of his half-pleased, half-terrified mother, (for Kathleen was too shrewd as well as faithful to be taken into their perilous counsels)—his implicit obedience to the 'pretty lady,' secured by previous presents and encouragement, stood up before the stranger priest, in a new suit of clothes, as fair a bridegroom to look upon, as though a soul had informed that goodly tenement which nature had been pleased to leave a vacuum.

If in his gawky inexperience, he let fall the ring, with which he had played like a child, unconscious of its use and value—if, in pronouncing the desecrated vows, a shudder of horror crept over the frame of the perjured bride—if, when the stolen ceremony was over, she fled like some guilty thing to her father's welcome threshold, which it formed no part of her plan, if plan it could be called, unless thrust from it, to forsake;—what was it all, when weighed against the insane triumph of being able, at the breakfast hour, to repay to that father the announcement of her lover's marriage, by the astounding intelligence that his heiress daughter—the descendant on one side of Spanish grandees, and on the other of English nobles—was the clandestinely-wedded wife of the papist, mad Michael?

It was with a more than usually cheerful countenance that Mr. Lascelles came down that morning. It was his last day but one in Ireland—always hated, and now more than ever distasteful Ireland!—and letters from England greeted his awakening, full of bright hopes for himself, and openings for an alliance such as his loftiest aspirations could have devised for his daughter. He gazed on her as she sat, with flushed cheek and flashing eye, at the board, and thought how well a coronet would become that regal brow, which would scarce have shamed a diadem.

'There are tidings for you here, Stella,' said he, 'that may well put to flight all your pensive reveries, or, rather, lend them newer and fairer subjects. My ideas—which I forbore to communicate lest they should lead to disappointment—of an alliance for you with my old college friend, (though my junior by some years,) Lord M——, seem likely to meet the concurrence of his family. From mine, I feel sure,' added he, with an exulting smile, 'they can have no obstacle to encounter.'

'Your daughter is married already!' was the astounding reply, in a voice of singular distinctness, though scarce raised above a whisper—'the outcast's bride!—the wife of mad Michael Trahorne!'

The effort was made, and the poor girl, who thus announced her shame, 'recoiling,' like the poet's fear, 'e'en from the sound herself had made,' sank fainting into her seat, while her lately proud parent, staggering as from a blow, had to lean for support on the nearest bookcase. The daughter rallied first.

'Father,' said she, 'let us understand each other. Thwarted in my legitimate affections, and destined, I knew, to be the sacrifice of your ambition, wonder not nor blame if I fulfilled your own imprecation, and shielded myself by sacrilege from prostitution. United in name only, to one, who, while he bars the door against others, neither can nor will claim me himself, I am ready to prove henceforth the dutiful daughter you have never yet suffered me to be, since I can now live, untortured by mercenary proposals, on the memory of a love I shall carry unsullied to the grave. Take me to England with you, father,' said she imploringly; 'and if it hurts your pride to say I am married to a mad boy, say, I have taken on me vows of another kind, and you will say but the truth—for I am a Catholic, father, since yesterday, as my Spanish ancestors were before me, till, by wedding with a heretic, one of them perilled my lost mother's soul, and laid up wretchedness in store for her unhappy offspring!'

The passionate girl's expostulation might have been longer poured forth unchecked, had her father's paralyzed astonishment not given

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place to a seizure alarmingly resembling apoplexy. His daughter flew to afford him assistance, but his remaining strength and consciousness were exerted to spurn her from him. Leaving her prostrate on the floor, another desperate effort enabled him to gain his study, where he remained buried in a chaos of reflections, the tenour of which may be left to the imagination, the whole remainder of the day.

His first impulse—that of any proud man similarly circumstanced, and one on which, perhaps, in her heart, a no less proud woman had unconsciously calculated—was to take steps for annulling, if possible, his daughter's disgraceful marriage. Its clandestine nature, her being a minor and an heiress, and the bridegroom a known imbecile, would have left it open to attack, even where interest less powerful was likely to be exercised. But, could the consequences of her present rashness be concealed, or even cancelled, he had little hope of cajoling, or even coercing, the resolute girl into any of the brilliant matches she had thus sought to escape from at the cost of worse than suicide: while the cloak this act, if known, would afford for setting her aside as insane, and possessing himself of the administration, at least, of her grandfather's accumulated property, held out to his ambitious mind, on reflection, a preferable mode of aggrandizement. He had never, as we have seen, entertained towards his alienated child any save feelings of injustice and unkindness; and now that she was the voluntary bride of a distracted papist—a despised natural—he would disown her for ever, and leave her to reap the fruits of her own headlong disobedience. So, compromising the matter with his conscience by assuring her (in a letter of characteristic sternness and austerity of rebuke) of an ample allowance to secure her against pecuniary distress, he enjoined her to repair to the husband and home she had chosen, 'for better for worse,' and to expiate, according to her newly-adopted Catholic tenets, by her life-long penance as a wife, her undutiful conduct as a daughter.

Before the letter could be read or comprehended by one whom the 'compunctious visitings of remorse' had already thrown into a fever, the father she was never again to see had sailed for England; and his wild, wayward girl, whose portion, but for him, would have been happiness, and, but for herself, might have been at least splendour, was thrown, by their mutual pride and misconduct, on the tender mercies of the low Irish relations of her nominal husband.

Old Kathleen, whose vexation at the connexion, far outweighed any honour she might have been tempted to derive from it, had knowledge enough of the world to rescue her nursling from some of its direst inflictions, by removing with her to a separate cottage—a sadly poor one, indeed, like all the rest of the village—where, at least, she could be secure from her grandson's hourly intrusion, and where the good woman attended on her young quondam mistress with unabated respect.

But it was not always easy, even for granny, old and infirm as she was, to restrain within due bounds the familiarities of others; and the money with which Michael's mother, and, through her, her son, was too profusely supplied, put into her head a world of impertinence and into his a world of mischief, from which till then the poor simpleton had been perfectly free. The secret of his wealth drew around him idle comrades in plenty, by whom he was taught to drink and to gamble, and even to bully, in his cups, the 'pretty lady,' his veneration for whom had so long been, unconsciously, a gratification, though a slender one, to her pride. Harassed by the tears and self-upbraidings of her nursling on the one hand, and the complaints and encroachments of her daughter on the other, old Kathleen, Estella's last friend and supporter, was, ere long, laid on her death-bed; and, worked upon by the priest, to whom humbling the daughter of Lascelles was a labour of love, joined in persuading the unhappy girl that it was her duty to try and rescue poor Michael from the ruinous indulgence of his mother, and the influence of evil associations.

When sober, the authority of the 'pretty lady' over the weak lad was still paramount; but, when under the effects of liquor, his nickname of 'mad Michael' became but too applicable—a stronger sedative than the mere reproving look, which at other times would make him shrink abashed, was required. It was his old grandmother, Kathleen, by whom the administration on such occasions of a small quantity of opium was first suggested; and the charm wrought by a few drops of the drug in a glass of some sweet liqueur, in procuring peace for the harassed mind of poor Estella, was too convenient and delightful not to ensure its repetition.

It was on the night after old Kathleen's funeral, when the strange boisterous sounds of mingled mirth and sorrow characterizing an Irish wake had given place to a solemn stillness more akin to the feelings of her whose first and last humble friend on earth had been taken from her, that a clamorous knocking at the door announced the return of mad Michael to the house he was henceforward to consider as his home. The crone by whom the faithful Katty was sadly superseded in the household opened the door—but even she shrank back from the wild glare of the crazed lad's eye, and the antic glee, harmonizing so ill with a chamber of death and his weeds of mourning.

If such were the feelings of the rude Irishwoman, what may be supposed to have been those of her mistress—heart-broken as she sat at her lonely hearth, estranged by her own reckless act from her natural position and protectors—when her solitude was invaded by the discordant mirth of mingled intoxication and insanity! To apply on the occasion the ever-ready resource of the drugged cordial was only too natural; but when this, contrary to custom, failed of its wonted effect, and he continued boisterous and troublesome as at first, so far, alas! from being inclined or being able to perform her painful duty to the unfortunate being before her, by soothing and retaining him within doors, his wretched wife felt it to be a relief when, stimulated rather than sobered by the somewhat

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larger than usual dose, he again sallied forth in quest of his boon companions.

Absorbed in grief for her faithful nurse, and in all the melancholy reflections to which her own hopeless condition was well calculated to give rise, the grey dawn, just struggling with the expiring lamp, found Estella still sitting in the desolate chamber, whence the corpse of her first friend had been a few hours before removed. A sound of footsteps, as if something heavy were borne by numbers, was heard approaching the house; several low taps on the door aroused the sleeping servant; it was opened; and as Estella hung in breathless suspense, lamp in hand, gazing over the narrow wooden staircase, the light flashed on what seemed, and too surely proved to be, the inanimate body of her crazed bridegroom.

Remorse and horror for her possible share in the catastrophe paralyzed his unhappy wife's tongue, but, in reply to the questions of the old woman, it appeared, from the testimony of his now thoroughly-sobered associates, that, shortly after joining them at the usual scene of their orgies, he had laid his head on the table as if to sleep, from which sleep he never again awoke!

On the bed whence the aged and shrunken limbs of his grandmother had been but a few hours before extended, was laid the stalwart but motionless form, and features placid—nay, in death almost intellectual—of poor mad Michael; and it may be questioned whether even the clamorous grief of his doting mother did not derive its chief alleviation from the tears, heart-wrung and bitter, which rained from the eyes of the proud 'lady' over the corpse of her fancied victim.

She soon after disappeared from the village; and it might be some six months after the events before narrated, and my assuming possession, as successor to its late venerable inmates, of the vicarage of Q——, that my natural misgivings regarding strange visitors at a late hour in the evening were relieved by the announcement of my old housekeeper, that a young woman wished to speak to me a moment in my study. I immediately went to her, anticipating, from the commiserating tone of my duenna, a case of no ordinary emergency among my humble parishioners, but actually recoiled on encountering, from beneath the hood of a common Irish cloak, the flash of an eye which, subdued and tear-dimmed as it was, spoke of something far loftier, as well as sadder, than ordinary present distress.

Before I could interfere to prevent her, the fair intruder was at my feet, imploring that, even from one stained with the guilt of murder, I would not withhold the consolations of religion.

'Murder!' I involuntarily exclaimed—'with *that* one like you could never, surely, have any connection!'

'Too much!—too near a connection!' replied she despairingly, 'for you see before you a wretch who has broken her father's heart, and taken away—God knows it was unwittingly—the life of her husband!'

She then told me, with many tears and disjointed exclamations, the heads of the story I afterwards gathered, as above detailed. That it interested me deeply in its unfortunate heroine, I need not say. I insisted on her accepting for some days an asylum under the roof where her childhood had been passed, and to which she had been irresistibly impelled as the scene of her self-inflicted—but no longer Catholic—confession; and feeling it above all things desirable to remove from her mind the impression that a quantity so inconsiderable of a soporific as that administered by her could have cost the life of a youth in robust health, I rode over next day to investigate (along with the incumbent who had succeeded her father in the cure of X——) the particulars of the lad's last fatal drinking bout.

There prevailed at the time, it seemed, a frolic (of which, since then, fatal advantage has been taken by ruffians of the same country for the actual deprivation of life,) of introducing narcotics, chiefly of a harmless nature, into the liquor of those inclined to be noisy or quarrelsome; and it turned out that Michael proving, as we have seen, on the night in question peculiarly unmanageable, had been silenced in a way often before practised by his thoughtless companions, who were in the habit of availing themselves of the slumbers thus induced to ease him of his truly 'superfluous' cash—one to whom it had never proved other than a curse. The opiate administered by them on this occasion, however, co operating with that he had previously received, had for once proved fatally powerful; while, alarmed at the consequences of their frolic, the sharers in it of course kept their own counsel, too happy to escape (from the absence of a coroner's inquest in Ireland) investigation into the cause of their comrade's decease.

Delighted to be able to relieve the mind of the unfortunate young lady, with whose beauty and hard usage from her father all the hamlet I had left still rang, I returned to Q——, fraught with tidings which I trusted would restore the bloom to her cheek, and the lustre to her eye. She thanked me—deeply and warmly thanked me—while the strong shudder that passed over her frame on hearing the details of the crime in which she had been an involuntary participator, seemed to indicate how heavily the guilt of even manslaughter had sat down on her soul. But the work of grief, and shame, and remorse, was already done; the elasticity which should have taught the young heart to rebound, for ever gone; and the once fair and still lovely Estella drooped so rapidly, that I became seriously alarmed, and summoned the best medical advice the district afforded.

The doctor, a kind and skilful man, saw with an eagle glance at once the the cause and termination of the malady. 'A broken heart, Mr. Travers,' said he to me, shaking his head mournfully, 'and for that the Materia Medica has no cure. *You* are the only practitioner who can prescribe successfully here; and even you, alas! can only apply palliatives, and smoothe the inevitable transition.'

I followed up the good physician's hint, and set myself devotedly and disinterestedly to bind up the wounds, both secular and spiritual, of this most interesting of penitents. In the very

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room where the rudiments of religion were first inculcated, in all their native purity, by the venerable protectors of her youth, and where her infant tongue first lisped in accents of prayer, I heard her abjure the errors of Romanism, and revert, with a tenacity of faith the more firm from its having been temporarily shaken, to the blessed truths of the Protestant creed, as first displayed to her in all their clearness by her late father's curate, the still dear and lamented Denovan.

Before these bright truths, and the glorious anticipations of eternity, all the remaining frost-work of pride and halo of passion melted gradually away; and Estella could dictate, in all sincerity, a letter to her father, (long since splendidly and miserably married,) the sole regret breathing in which was, that she could not at his feet sue for forgiveness, and cheer his decline with the filial endearments for which her softened spirit yearned.

One unexpressed, but well I knew not uncherished expectation, was strangely and unexpectedly realised.

Duty obliged me to tear myself, at a moment when no danger of immediate dissolution seemed pending, from my interesting charge. My absence was inevitably prolonged; and when, at length, a summons to come if I would see her alive brought me, at all hazards, to her bed of death, I found it had been smoothed—'not according to man's device,' but the inscrutable decree of Providence—by the apparent accident which had substituted for the neighbouring clergyman, summoned by my people, a casual assistant in this gentleman's sabbath duties, in the person of the chosen of her heart, the object of her first earthly love, the ever faithful and now widowed Denovan!

We laid her head together in the grave, but it may be believed I yielded the first place, in so doing, to him whose sole consolation in having resigned here below a treasure so recklessly thrown away by herself and others, lay in the hope of receiving it, purified from earthly dross and alloy, in a future and better world!

THE CHOICE OF A FRIEND.

BY MAJOR CALDER CAMPBELL.

Give not thy friendship to the fickle!—They
Will, windlike, veer from faith to faithlessness;
Forsaking thee ere yet their last caress
Hath cooled upon thy cheek, or ceased to press
Upon thy breast!—Let not thy friendship's ray
Linger upon the vain!—Their love's excess
Springs but from flattered fancy, and decay
Attends their warmest shows of tenderness,
If but one check their petty pride receive
From truthful care!—Thy friendship do not give
To the capricious, to the proud, the light!
The first all causelessly thy breast will leave,—
The second shun thee in thine hour of blight,—
The third, from very lightness, thy fond heart deceive!
May I not love the changeful? Are not they
Most like myself, e'en in their changefulness?—
Not so! not so! My love hath ne'er grown less,
Nor chilled to such as won its tenderness,
Nor left them,—though they wandered!—Every day
Unfolds the vanity, which to suppress
Within my nature, I attempt in vain;
And must I flee my fellows, and disdain
The faulty, since their very faults are mine?
Caprice, and pride, and light frivolity,
Do they not oft their triune force combine
To slay true peace and drown humility
Within my spirit? Let me then still feel
A love for Man, tho' Time his and my faults reveal!

Sidmouth, August, 1841.

THE THREE KNIGHTS AND THE LADY ERRANT.

A TALE OF TRUE CHIVALRY.

BY EDWARD HOWARD, AUTHOR OF "RATTLIN THE REEFER," "JACK ASHORE," &c. &c.

Many very beautiful things have been said by the best and the worst writers on that most beautiful of all subjects, woman. Some of these aphorisms we would repeat, did we not fear that our intelligent readers would immediately discover the plagiarisms; but the greater number of them we shall avoid, simply because they are not worth the repeating. But of this the gentler sex may be well assured, that whenever an author begins his essay by lauding excessively the ladies in general, some dreadfully disparaging story at their expense is most particularly to be feared.

Of the manifold and intensely good qualities of woman, we can say nothing new; and as to the other side of the question, if there be a dark side to it, we will not trump up old stories in order to open anew old grievances. The sex might have had their faults some very long time ago, but as to the present time—— Well, show me an error that may be their peculiar and distinctive attribute, and I will show two excellent reasons for it—a liability from which the ladies have always been exempt, both *de jure*, and, which is better still, *de facto* also.

Having premised thus much, it will be understood, without any great effort of the discriminating faculties, that, in the tale of chivalry we are going to relate, nothing disrespectful is meant to the belles of the present day, who are as unlike the beauties of the feudal ages as any husband can wish. Is it possible to say more in their praise?

In that year of redemption in which there was a great probability of all the southern part of Christendom being reduced to Mahometanism and slavery by the victorious arms of the Turks, Hungary suffered excessively. The hosts of the prophet had swept through the whole land, and had left behind them that emphatic kind of peace—the solitude of the sword's making. In

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fact, the country was only safe for robbers, knights-errant, and damsels erring. The fields were fruitful in adventures, and nothing else; the villages were burned, the small towns in a state of ruin, and the larger ones in a state of siege.

The day had been sultry; the evening breeze had just begun to temper the oppressive heat, when a knight, armed cap-à-pie, emerged from the shades of a forest of tall cork-trees. No crustaceous animal from the crab to the crocodile, was better provided with defensive armour than he. Before the man could be got at, he must have been cracked like a hazelnut. He was a fine specimen of six feet two of humanity plated up in steel. His horse was a powerful animal of the Flemish breed—not swift, but gigantic, large-boned, and sinewy. He certainly would not have excelled among a field of hunters, or have cleared a fence with a ditch on either side: but at a solid, heavy charge, he would have borne down before him almost any obstacle that chivalry could have opposed to him.

The knight was resplendent in bright steel armour, relieved and ornamented by inlaid silver. He extolled himself in the name of Sir Blondelin Blanchefoi. In everything he affected the colour of white. His shield, which, at the moment he appeared from out the forest, hung suspended before his breast, was one surface of polished steel, with a silver sun wrought in its centre; under which was an inscription, in some villanous provincial language, to the effect that he championed unto the death for the purity of the Norman dames. If the noble knight had any faith in his motto, he must have early settled his worldly affairs. As we have before mentioned that the weather was extremely hot, it is not surprising that Sir Blondelin rode leisurely forward with his casque hooked on to his saddle, the long white plume of which almost swept the ground. Being bareheaded, he displayed a round, ruddy, sun-tanned face; a large mouth, with very thick lips; a nose, by no means too prominent, with wide and very open nostrils; a large merry blue eye; a forehead marvellously low—at which we must not be surprised, considering what he had undertaken to fight for; and thick, curly, sandy hair. He was a jovial fellow; and when he smiled, he displayed a row of immensely large, yet beautifully white teeth. He could not have been more than three-and-twenty, and his thick, bull-dog looking neck told of muscular strength but little less than Herculean.

With a hoarse cracked voice—for the man was thirsty—he was shouting out, with all the vigour of his lungs, what he was pleased to call a roundelay in honour of his lady-love. It would have been difficult to have determined, from the expression of his features, whether he was performing a task or doing himself a pleasure; if the latter, he was most assuredly alone in the enjoyment, for a more discordant noise could not well have marred the stillness of that beautiful evening. However, as there was no one to hiss, Sir Blondelin rode and sang on without interruption, but not without company.

At a respectful distance behind him was his squire—a lean, strong man, with a dark hard countenance, and a most villanous hungry aspect. His jaws were tremendous, and his teeth, sharp, huge, and straggling, gave him a wolfish look, that might well startle young people of both sexes, particularly if they were plump. Though infinitely worse armed, he was nearly as well mounted as his master; and so he needed to be, for he carried, in the first place, Sir Blondelin's huge war-lance in his right hand. Immediately before him, on the saddle-bow, was a large skin, containing some four or five gallons of a strong but execrably-tasted wine, so vicious with resin, that no one but a knight-errant or his squire could have smacked their lips after drinking it. An iron pot hung on the one side of him, containing a rude tinder-box, some salt, a piece of soap, a shaving-box, and two very detestable razors; whilst attached to one of the three legs of the said pot was a serviceable billet for cutting wood, and which, when the occasion offered itself, was found as useful in lopping off the limb of a man as of a tree. To balance all these implements of housekeeping that hung on the left side of the squire, there was a capacious bag of meal on the right, among which were safely stored sundry pieces of fat bacon, neats' tongues, and a few lengths of strongly garlicked German sausage. Behind him was lashed the carcass of a newly-slaughtered sheep. We mention all these particulars to show that knights-errant did not formerly, as is vainly supposed, travel over vast plains and deserts for weeks and months, living with the squires only upon the memory of their loves and the breath of honour. Of course, their chroniclers have been too proud or too busy to notice these mean and sordid things: so that the readers of romances have been led into the error that heroes never ate but at kingly banquets; drank, but out of golden goblets, at the sound of the trumpet; or slept, but under silken canopies, on beds of down, in the arms of beauty, excepting, merely for the sake of variety, now and then upon the flinty rock.

Guiscardo was the name of Sir Blondelin's squire; and he was armed with a good cross-bow that shot iron bolts, and which made very ugly bruises; a straight, sharp, two-edged sword; and a *couteau de chasse*, that performed the service of a dagger, with a point made expressly for the purpose of being thrust through the bars of a vizor, and thus thrusting out the life of any helpless unhorsed man in iron whom it might be convenient to despatch. Altogether, the knight and his squire made a pair of very formidable homicides.

The knight and squire jogged on leisurely through the open country for about half a mile—the former still labouring at his roundelay, and the latter solacing himself by munching and sucking the end of a German sausage, which he held in his left hand, his right supporting perpendicularly his master's lance. As they proceeded, the knight, who was about a hundred paces in advance, descried, first, a clump of trees; then a white tomb in the midst of them; and lastly, a knight, like himself, completely armed, apparently keeping guard over the monument. At this spectacle, Sir Blondelin Blanchefoi drew

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up suddenly, and turning his head, shouted to his faithful squire, who had just time to hurry his sausage into the meal unperceived.

'Holla, Sir Varlet! lace on my helmet, and give me my lance! It seemeth to me that we shall run a course with that valiant knight, for he is pricking towards us.'

'Run me no courses fasting,' said Guiscardo, doggedly, as he completely put his master into what might well be called an iron safe, by closing the bars of his helmet and lacing on his shield. 'Sing on your song, sir master of mine; and should he interrupt us, I'll hit him on the vizor with a bolt that shall make his teeth chatter.'

'Thou sayest well, Guiscardo. In truth, though I lack not courage, I have more stomach for the breast of that *mouton* that thou bearest behind thee, and which we will cook anon, than for a turn *à l'outrance*. So up goes my song, let the devil and the black knight take it as they list.'

But the black knight, just then, seemed inclined to take nothing amiss; so having reconnoitred the strangers, he quietly took himself back to his station before the tomb, with his lance couchant and his vizor down. His whole appearance was black as night; there was nothing seen bright about him but the sharp steel-head of his spear, for his charger was as black as himself.

Sir Blondelin's way lying directly past where the black knight seemed thus standing in defiance, it was impossible for the latter not to hear the refrain of the white knight's song; which, if unmusical before, was trebly harsh as it was grated through the bars of his helmet, to this effect:—

'Whilst life shall to this frame endure,
I never will my faith resign!
The sex are fair, but still more pure,
O, Bellarosa! Bella mine!
Thou and all thy sex are pure!'

Whilst Sir Blondelin was chanting out, *à pleine gorge*, this confession of faith—casting, however, sideways all the time, a sheep's-eye at the terrible-looking black knight, and strenuously trying to appear very unconcerned—the dark warrior spurred forwards, and touching the plume of Sir Blondelin with the tip of his lance, roared out, 'Sir Knight, thou liest in thy throat!'

Sir Blondelin immediately reined up, wheeled round, and rode back a sufficient space to run a course at the assaulter. But Guiscardo, who fully expected something of the sort, was prepared for this crisis; and not wishing his dinner delayed, or altogether lost, by such a foolish process and one so unsatisfactory as fighting, shot his bolt from his cross-bow, with an aim so good and a force so great, that he broke down two of the bars of the pugnacious knight's vizor, and gave him a very bloody mouth, which caused him to spit, hiss, and cough through his helmet in a very unknightly manner.

But Guiscardo, with the rueful countenance, was not to have the battle all his own way. Another unexpected combatant came upon the arena. As the black knight was, if we may use the expression, upon permanent duty, he had not trusted wholly to that Providence which cares for things so innocent as sparrows. He had, also, his squire with him and his provender; and they had built themselves a little hut near the tomb, in which both master and servant were wont to retire during the night, and several times in the day also, in order to partake of needful refection. At the beginning of this affray, Rubert, the black knight's squire, was very commendably employed in preparing his own and his master's supper, by roasting about half a stone of swine's flesh before the fire, using his long narrow sword for a spit. Not being able readily to disengage the flesh from the sword, he sallied forth with his meat upon his weapon in one hand, and his shepherd's sling in the other. Seeing it was an assault of long shot, and whilst his mouth was watering at the relishing sight and savoury odour of the half-roasted pork, Guiscardo received a rounded pebble full on the side of his jaws that made them rattle like dice in a box. Thus so far, the combat might be said to be even.

When the black knight had sufficiently cleared his mouth from blood to enable him to speak distinctly, he began to curse and swear in a most unchivalrous manner at the white knight; who, forgetting the dignity of his golden spurs was laughing now, as heartily as he was singing a little while before, at the grimaces of both the black knight and his own trusty squire.

'Sir knight—Sir buffoon!' stuttered and spluttered forth the black knight, 'this ribaldry is very unseemly; and thou art dishonoured in permitting in thy presence a belted knight to be smitten by the hand of a villain: wherefore I challenge thee to mortal combat.'

'Who art thou, thou dark man with the bloody mouth?' answered Sir Blondelin, assuming as much dignity as his broad face could express. 'Sir Blondelin Blanchefoi wars not with unknown wanderers, and sings unquestioned his own roundelay.'

This, certainly, was the countercheck quarrelsome, and was met more than half-way: but whilst this little affair is ripening so satisfactorily, we must say a few words on the proceedings of the subordinates. Guiscardo, when his sense of pain from the rude blow of the stone had a little abated, drew out his cross-bow and prepared himself for retaliation. But Rubert was on his guard. Twang went the string of the bow, and aside sprang Rubert. The bolts began to grow scarce; and as Guiscardo was mounted, and Rubert on foot, the former determined to trust no more to his missiles, but charge at once. Rubert, perceiving the wicked intention, retreated in good order, and gained the inside of the door of the hut at the moment when Guiscardo was barred all entry by the size of himself and horse taken together. Rubert, filling up the door-way with his sword pointed, with the pork still spitted upon it, they mutually sounded a parley. The roast pork was the most potent pacificator.

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Guiscardo stood in much need of revenge, but more of luncheon; for dining to-day, seeing the bellicose state of the two principals, seemed very problematical: and as the hurt he had received was nothing very serious, by some secret understanding, in which there was but little waste of words, the two squires were amicably seated over the fire, each doing his best to complete the cooking of the pork, and tempering the heat by huge glasses of strong ale that Rubert very hospitably displayed.

We well know, that had our veracious romance been written in the usual style, not a word of all this would have transpired. The whole of this transaction would have been cavalierly dismissed in some such manner as this:—'The two trusty squires of the right valorous knights retired within the hut, in order to settle some important point of the law of the tournament,' &c., &c.

Return we to our knights, who were too much heated with their own dispute to notice the termination of that of their squires. When Sir Blondelin had asked the name of the stranger, and had so courageously asserted his own right to sing his own song, he was thus fiercely replied to:—

'Sir Blondelin Blanchefoi, know that to me thou art not wholly unknown. I have heard of thy deeds of arms; albeit it has not yet been my fate to witness them. Also, know that I am called Sir Lugubricius Lollodine, or the Black Knight of Disappointment. I have borne me gallantly both in the field and the lists; therefore fear thee not, Sir Blondelin; but as the sun is setting, and as I scent the cooking of the meat, and am hungered exceedingly, I would gladly wash my mouth from this blood, and essay what damage hath befallen my dentals upon the provision that my squire hath doubtless prepared for me. I say this, sir knight, in no lack of courage; for if after reflection your mind hold to it, I will swinge thee soundly, and by my halidome, I'll soil thy white plume in the dust, for a white plume my heart abideth not.'

'Churlish and inhospitable knight!' replied Sir Blondelin: 'as thou invitest me not to thy board, I tell thee I defy thee, and that I scorn both thee and thy roast pork; but nathless, that I may not take thee at advantage, I will await until thou hast washed away the inconvenience of thy wound; and if thou faintest for lack of food, I will abide me here until thou art filled with thy swine's flesh. I war not on the wounded or the half-starved!'

'I thank thee for thy courtesy, though discourteously displayed,' said the black knight. 'What ho! hilloa!—slave — Rubert — villain, rascal—come forth, thou gormandiser!'

In order to beguile the time whilst Sir Lugubricius was volubly wording his kind invitation to his squire, Sir Blondelin struck up his old refrain—

'I never will my faith resign!
The sex are fair, but still more pure;
O, Bellarosa! Bella mine!
Thou and all thy sex are pure!'

At this the black knight, in his fury, forgetting his bloody mouth and the roasting pork, shouted out—

'False knight, thou liest! All the sex are foul, and thy Bella Rosa is anybody's Bella that listeth.'

'Have at thee, base calumniator! I will thrust with my spearhead thy vile heresy down thy recreant throat.'

By this time, they had each recovered a sufficient distance to give a full impetus to their onward charge, when Sir Blondelin shouting out his battle-cry, 'Bellarosa,' and ejaculating, 'Thou and all thy sex are pure,' and the black knight shrieking out, 'False as the fiends!' they met each other half-way in full career. But the two combatants were well versed in this mode of warfare. Each carried his lance with nervous and unswerving hand and level aim; and each received his adversary's point full upon the centre of his shield. The white knight, however, being far the heavier man, and being also more heavily mounted, thrust his opponent backwards well nigh upon the crupper, the whole of the cumbrous saddle moving backwards with him, whilst Sir Blondelin received no other detriment but a cruel jar upon his right arm, which shook the bones of it up to his shoulder.

At the jar and noise of the conflict, the two trusty squires, as in duty bound, came out—we must say, rather unwillingly—from the hut, and, without mounting their respective steeds, took proper positions behind their masters. Sir Lugubricius, with the assistance of Rubert, having replaced his saddle and well tightened the girths, ran another tilt against Sir Blondelin, after this wise:—seeing that he stood no chance in mere weight of metal with the white knight, who was crowing like a cock, and singing out jollily—

'Bellarosa! Bella mine!
Thou and all thy sex are pure!'

he, the black belligerent, when their lances were almost in contact, suddenly lifted his, and aimed a shrewd blow at his foe's headpiece, which, if it had taken effect, would very considerably have deranged his canticle. But he with the unmusical voice was not to be so easily taken at advantage, for, lifting up his lance to parry the thrust, the two weapons clashed together in the centre of their staves, and were both broken, and the knights passed each other in the course without further injury.

They drew their swords—of course they drew their swords—swords that were each of them christened by some magnificent name—and approaching each other, again began to hack and hew, and cut and thrust, till both of them were fairly out of breath, and the two squires looking on with the most commendable air of unconcern that it is possible to conceive. Fruitless as this mutual hammering upon iron might seem, the bruises inflicted through it began to be felt, and some of the plates of the armour to give way, till at length blood began to ooze over the cuirasses, greaves, and cuisses of both combatants. At length, as if by consent, both came to a pause,

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and seemed, by their heavy breathing, to be seeking from this momentary cessation of hostilities renewed vigour to carry out their argument. Guiscardo, seizing this opportunity, plucked Rubert by the sleeve, and whispered him in the ear:—'Friend, as this promises to be a long passage at arms, which may be some time before it comes to a turning, take thee, friend, to thy legs, and look to the turning of the roast, for verily my heart yearneth towards it.'

The hint was not thrown away upon the careful Rubert, who, in the couching of a lance, vanished within the hut.

The combat was renewed: and it was evident that the ire was increased, and the blood up in each party. They seemed no longer to fight merely to acquit themselves to their consciences. They vaulted on their saddles; they wheeled their horses; they looked out eagerly for fissures in each other's coats of mail, and thrust at them with mortal malignity. They were in earnest. Sir Blondelin had ceased to sing about his 'Bella Rosa,' and Sir Lugubricius to shout out 'The sex are false.' The cuts were no longer scratches; and the stabs no longer prickings. It was evident that, without some interference, the conflict would terminate fatally to one or both. Fortune treated these two foolish men much better than they deserved, and probably saved the lives of both.

Whilst each was meditating the *coup de grace* for his enemy, a blast was heard from some wind instrument, not quite so musical as the notes of a swine-herd's horn, but almost. Suddenly the conflict ceased, and a portly and majestic knight, attended by a well-equipped squire, —the man who made the horrible noise—came riding proudly forward, and bade, as authoritatively as if he had been the king himself, or the king's sworn constable, that the battle should immediately cease, upon the pain of making the recusant his foe; at which communication both the squires of the combatants had many blissful anticipations of crackling and savoury morsels of fat and lean.

The stranger knight was a man of middle age, very well and completely armed in bright steel, chequered with blue and white. His plume consisted of feathers of the same colours mingled together. On his chequered shield was inscribed the motto, '*Pour la Gaieté*,' which, being translated into our vernacular, signifies 'Go it.' As he looked strong, fresh, and vigorous, and like one that would not stand any nonsense, the two jaded combatants thought it very prudent to obey.

The stranger then commanded the knights to detail to him the cause of their quarrel. Now, as Sir Blondelin had been more for dining than fighting, he had nothing to complain of but that the black knight would not let him dine, but would make him fight, the task of detailing the cause of action very naturally fell upon Sir Lugubricius. At the suggestion of the stranger, who seemed intuitively to understand that Sir Lugubricius was prosy, he recommended them all to make themselves comfortable; very considerately remarking that, if their quarrel should happen to turn out to be irreconcileable, there would be a very fine full moon at nine o'clock, by which it might be decided *à l'outrance*, and that he would be happy to assist as umpire, and to bury the dead afterwards, whether it might happen to be one or both.

All parties found this proposition to be most reasonable; so they alighted. The two fighting-knights divested themselves of their armour, had their slight wounds dressed by their respective squires, and the horses being tethered among some rich grass, the three knights sat down lovingly on the greensward, whilst the three squires joined all their powers and provents and formed a very desirable *coterie de cuisine*. In due time the *alfresco* and *impromptu* repast was served up, and very profoundly enjoyed. The wine was not forgotten; and, before twilight, three jollier knights were not to be found throughout the whole kingdom of Hungary.

When these excellent companions were just in that state to appreciate bad wine, and to call for more of it, the stranger knight, who had announced himself as Sir Florian Folleœur, called upon the black knight to give some account of himself, and of the reasons that had induced him to seek the life of so pleasant a wine-bibber as bonny Sir Blondelin. Whereupon Sir Lugubricius made up a very penitential countenance; and, strengthening his mind and his voice with a huge draught of wine, spoke very nearly as follows:—

'Most noble knights and most honourable companions,—You see before you the most wretched of human beings—the outcast and contempt of the whole human race—one whose daily food is misery, and whose only drink tears,' [his misery had made him totally forget the pieces of mutton, pork, and German sausage which he had devoured, and the quarts of wine that he had unconsciously poured down his throat;] 'and all this solely imputable to the perfidy and faithlessness of the foul sex falsely called fair.'

At this point of the speech, Sir Blondelin would have immediately given the traducer the lie, had not his mouth and throat been filled with wine; but he gulped the insult and the liquor down together, and, being really a good-natured fellow, suffered the traducer to proceed, merely bestowing upon him an emphatic shrug of his Herculean shoulders, and on himself another draught of liquid.

'That I speak within bounds,' continued Sir Lugubricius, 'both of you will allow when I relate to you my unhappy story. I loved, and I thought myself deeply, truly beloved, by a dame of high degree,—a princess, of course; for what true knight would ever bestow his affections upon a lady of a lower degree?'

'None, whatever,' said both the listeners in chorus, whilst Sir Blondelin chimed in at the end with his favourite noise of—

'Oh, Bellarosa! Bella mine!
Thou and all thy sex are pure!'

'Excepting she were a shepherdess,' said Sir Florian, considerately correcting himself.

'Excepting she were a shepherdess, of course,' said the other two knights; and then Sir Lugubricius continued his story.

'This princess, whose name I am not yet at

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liberty to unfold, as a true, virtuous damosel errant, shared with me my toils, my board, and my travels, disguised, generally, as my page. What dangers with me has she not undergone! what vows of fidelity has she not made to me! —but the dangers were shared, and the protestations were made in vain. She proved false—cruelly, infamously false. I surprised the deceiver in the arms of another. I slew him! when, horror! I beheld in the unsuspecting victim of her wiles my own, my only, my best-beloved friend. He alone was innocent—he knew not of the wrong that he was treacherously made to inflict upon me. He even confided his amour to me, for the perfidious woman used to meet him under a feigned name. She fled from my vengeance; for, at the moment, I was so overwhelmed with grief, that I was sensible to nothing but that I was a murderer—a murderer of the best friend that ever stood gallantly by in the hour of danger and in the day of need.

'I have done all that remained for me to do. In that monument, shaded by those cypress tress, are contained the remains of my valued and ever-to-be-deplored friend; whilst I have imposed upon myself, as a penance for my murder, a solemn vow, whilst this poor life is left to me, to maintain against all the world the universal falsehood of the sex.'

'This is of a truth, a doleful story, Sir Lugubricius,' said the white knight; 'you are really much to be pitied, and you have my full permission to be as angry as you will with your light-o'-love: but I must not permit you, on that account, to think disrespectfully of my liege lady.' And off he went at his old song:—

'Oh, Bellarosa! Bella mine!
Thou and all thy sex are pure!'

At this outbreak, Sir Lugubricius began again to fume; and the quarrel would certainly have been renewed but for the good-natured interference of Sir Florian, who observed that Sir Blondelin was quite in the right; that the whole sex ought not to be outraged for the crime of one; and that he knew, from a most happy experience, that a lady could love, at once desperately and discreetly, devotedly and truly.

'Indeed,' he continued, being a little elevated with the wine, and still more by a sense of his own excellence, 'I may, without vanity, boast of possessing, solely and most enthusiastically, the love and favours of one of the most beautiful princesses in Christendom. Think not, Sir Knights, that she be frail; her fidelity to me, the purity of her unshaken faith, consecrate, and, as it were, turn into a virtue the one little error of her life.' Then clasping his hands across his breast, and lifting up his eyes in the most approved of manner, he exclaimed, 'Bounteous and just Heaven, pour down thy choicest gifts—envelope with thy sweetest blessings, as a reward for her loving constancy, Isabella of Aldegunda, a princess in her own right, and sovereign of my soul by the right of love!'

At the announcement of this name, Sir Blondelin sprang upon his legs, and with the rapidity of a flash of lightning unsheathing his sword, he rushed upon the astonished lover of the Princess Isabella of Aldegunda, furiously exclaiming—

'Liar! slanderer! perfidious defamer!—Coward! defend thyself! The virtuous lady that your irreverent lips have dared to defame is my own—my thrice virtuous love—my Bellarosa, Bella mine! I will die here, or anywhere, against any odds, in defence of her chastity!'

Sir Florian was not slow in answering this presumptuous challenge. Calling to his trusty squire for his trusty blade, it was not long before it was crossing the trusty blade of Sir Blondelin. A ready had the two knights made some shrewd passes, and as many unexceptionable parries, when they mutually came to a pause by the extravagant behaviour of the black knight. This sombre gentleman, from whom not even the good cheer that he had been enjoying could extort a smile, now exploded with one of the most unsophisticated horse-laughs that ever shook the rude sides of an onion-crammed clown. It was this unconquerable laugh that had prevented him from sooner interfering to prevent this new duello. When, at length, he could find words, he exclaimed, in a very jovial manner:—

'My good friends, put up your swords. If you, Sir Blondelin, fight for the chastity of the fair Isabella, you will combat for that which has, young as she is, many years ceased to exist. This Lady Isabella of Aldegunda is my false mistress, who caused me so unfortunately to shed the blood of my friend, and to whose memory I have caused that marble monument to be erected in yonder cypress grove. It is in expiation of the murder committed through her falsehood and incontinence, that I have put myself on the penance of maintaining the inherent depravity of the sex; but I now see my folly—noble knights, see yours. Really, there is nothing to fight about. What, ho! ye idling squires! three more brimming goblets of the Greek wine! Let us, Sir Knights, pledge each other never more to take up a quarrel in behalf of that which none of us can ever know anything about.'

At this sensible harangue the three squires, each with a broad grin across his countenance, handed to their respective knights a bumper, which none of them refused; and draining the cups to the very bottom, they made the required pledge. They then, in a very amicable manner, each related his love adventure with the lady; and they had the supreme satisfaction to find that they had all been treated alike.

The rest of the evening was passed in the most festive manner. The more wine that they drank, the more sensible they thought that they became; till, at length, they arrived at the philosophical conclusion of taking the world just as they found it, and enjoying as much of it, without examining things too narrowly, as they could. Thus they continued to moralize, drink, and sing through the twilight, until, as Sir Florian had predicted, the moon rose, and the heavy summer dews began to fall. They then discovered, that to sleep without some shelter would not be very healthful to their green wounds; and the two hurt knights ap-

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pealed to Sir Florian, who had displayed so much wisdom about the moon's rising, if he could not give them some sage counsel as to their future proceedings. Being thus appealed to, he scratched his head with much gravity; by which thoughtful operation he remembered, that about a half of a league to the eastward there was a gentleman's chateau, which, though recently plundered by the Turks, had still very strong walls and good roofs remaining. Though deserted, it would afford them good shelter for the night, and thither they all determined to proceed. The arrangements were soon made, and the monument deserted by Sir Lugubricius with but little compunction.

The whole cavalcade of knights and squires rode merrily, though slowly, on through the blithe moonshine, talking, now by turns and now altogether, rather, we are sorry to confess, disadvantageously of the ladies. That they were egregiously in the wrong every one must confess; but as they had been individually so very unfortunate, we must not visit them with too much indignation.

At length the walls of their destined retreat appeared above the trees and shrubs of the delicious garden that surrounded them. Sir Florian assuring the rest of the party that the chateau was deserted, they went, in the first instance, to the stables; in which they and their squires having duly provided for the comfort of their horses, they proceeded, cautiously and silently, through the green walks and shaded avenues towards the house. They had not gone far when they perceived a light glimmering through the leaves of a fragrant arbour, and, upon approaching more near, they heard the soft murmur of voices.

Caution now became doubly necessary. The three knights stole up to the very place, and through the branches of the honeysuckle, jasmine, and arbutus, they beheld a gallant, handsome, and magnificently attired Turk kneeling at the feet of the incomparable Princess Isabella of Aldegunda! Ardent were the Mussulman's expressions of gratitude—fervent his protestations of constancy and love. He swore, more than once, by the Prophet, that she was the incomparable paragon of fidelity.

When our three cavaliers had sufficiently enjoyed this scene, they rushed in upon the entranced lovers, and seizing the Turk, brought him out upon the lawn, and, for the want of a blanket, gave him a most limb-shaking tossing in his own shawl. During this operation of involuntary vaulting, the constant Isabella began reviling, in the most outrageous manner, the poor believer in Mahomet; and between whiles endeavouring, in turn, to recommend herself to one of her former lovers. These, after they had nearly shaken the life out of the unfortunate infidel, gave both him and the lady, without deigning to notice the latter with a single word, in charge to their squires, commanding them to keep them apart, and close prisoners in the loft of the stables, until the morrow, when they purposed to conduct them to the Austrian camp.

The three knights then went and flung themselves on the floor in their cloaks, and in a short time they were all apparently in a sound sleep. A little after one, Sir Lugubricius arose and stole softly out; who was followed by Sir Florian, who was followed by Sir Blondelin. With a unanimity most marvellous, they all repaired to the stables. What they really wished to do there, it is impossible to say; but this is certain, they all averred that they went to see whether the trusty squires could be trusted with the prisoners. It appears that they could not, or at least one of them; for a full hour before the knights arrived, the prisoners had bribed the most trusty one of the squires, and were now many miles upon their way to the Turkish frontiers, taking with them the three knights' horses and the well-beloved squire of Sir Blondelin, the hungry Guiscardo, as their attendant.

In this unfortunate case there was very little to be done, and a great deal to be said; what they did we shall not recount, and what they said we shall not relate, further than this,—that they all afterwards grew very sensible men indeed for knights-errant, and never after placed their affections upon ladies who rode about as errant damosels from camp to castle, and from castle to camp, although they might be born princesses, and were as beautiful as Isabella of Aldegunda.

THE WOMAN HATER.

No. III.

BY WARNER OLIPHANT.

THE COUNTESS AND HER FRIENDS.

"Wonder it is to see in divers mindes,
How diversely Love doth his pageants play."
SPENCER'S FAERIE QUEENE.

My dear Cecil, you shall not now have to murmur at my indulging too much in the tragic vein; the present reminiscence is scarcely more than an anecdote, but, short though it is, I hope you may find it worth a smile. When I went abroad, the hope of enjoying the society of an old college friend, Ned Hayleigh, with whom I had long been on terms of the most confidential intercourse, induced me to go forthwith to Milan. Had I reflected on his confirmed social habits, some hesitation might have delayed this step; I should have remembered that whereso-ever Ned Hayleigh was, there was no room for the indulgence of moody humours, since he was an infallible attractor of all the merry spirits like himself that came within his sphere, and one was certain to find him the centre of as riotous a group as ever gave food for the police sheet of Bow Street office, or trouble to the panting proctors of our Alma Mater. As it proved, however, my seeking him was the wisest course that could possibly have been adopted, for under the very worst circumstances high spirits are more or less contagious, and the melancholy that might have nursed itself into

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madness, frequently gives way before the exhilarating influence of surrounding mirth. Poor Ned! a finer fellow never breathed; he would have dared earth and sea to serve a friend, and so well was his warm nature appreciated, that his friends would, one and all, have done their utmost to serve him in turn. He was drowned some years after in Norway, and there lies his dust.

'Noll, my dear boy,' said he, when I joined him, 'you are as welcome as if you brought news of a legacy. Sit down here, old fellow. Dined, I suppose? Sullivan, shove round the bottle. Grimmett, bring glasses. Sullivan, Jack Forby, Macneil, Wilson—my friend Warner Oliphant.'

This brief introduction paved the way to a delightful addition to my circle of acquaintance. Forby had been our contemporary at St. John's; Major Sullivan was a stranger, but I had known his brother; Macneil and Wilson were new faces, but being very young, very merry, and very good-natured, were familiar at once, and intimates in an hour.

'We are to adjourn to the *la Scala*,' said Macneil, a young Scotch *laird*; 'are you inclined to join us? You will hear the finest singing in Italy to-night, if Hayleigh permits you to listen.'

'Very true,' said Major Sullivan. 'Velluti was in magnificent voice at rehearsal, though I prophesy that this "*Aureliano*" will disappoint the hopes of its stripling composer. The thing will be a failure, unless that wonderful voice, with its incomparable power and execution, avails to save it. However, with Velluti you do not risk a disappointment.'

'And as all the world will be there,' said Wilson, 'you can have a catalogue with notes and illustrations of all the mentionables in Milan. It will be a vast saving of time to you in that preliminary branch of your education.'

'I shall be delighted to visit a theatre which has the credit of being the first in the world. Let me finish my glass of claret, and I am much at your service.

After a few minutes' further conversation we rose to go. 'Ned,' I heard Sullivan say, 'you know it is quite against rule to allow your friend to sit with us; that is, in the Society's box at least.'

'Nonsense! I'll be his surety that he joins us in a week,' said Hayleigh.

'In that case we may for once break the rule,' said Sullivan. 'The fact is,' he added, turning to me, 'the *Amici*, a society to which we all belong, but you, has a box at *la Scala*; and we have agreed to suspend our rule against the admission of strangers in your favour; Hayleigh here will explain the somewhat unusual method of gaining admittance, should you desire to become one of us.'

In half an hour we were all seated in the theatre, enjoying the second act of Rossini's *Aureliano*, and surveying the varied and numerous audience. There was only one person in our box besides our own party; he was a young man who seemed to take very little interest in the opera, and a great deal in a box on the same tier as ours, but the opposite side. I concluded he was one of the *Amici*.

'Pray, Oliphant,' said Ned, 'where did you pick up that funeral aspect? You are not dressed in mourning, or I should fancy your grand-aunt had died. Where gottest thou that goose-look?'

'Do not ask me now; you shall hear the story soon, and a fearful one it is. But come, tell me, how one is admitted to the privileges of this society; I have serious thoughts of becoming a member. Are you any relations to the "Arcadians," or the "Ozioni," or the "Umidi!"'

'None in the least, except that our title, like those of the fantastic corporations you name, embodies a joke. Look across the theatre—there—in a line with the chandelier—and tell me what you see.'

'I see a very beautiful girl, of diminutive figure, sitting alone, and stealing frequent glances at this side—to this very box.'

'No wonder,' said Ned, 'for she is the patroness of the *Amici*.'

'That is the Countess V.,' said Macneil, 'a rich widow of a poor Italian count, aged nineteen in years, but twice nineteen in cunning. She is an English girl, and her father kept a fruit shop in the Strand. She travelled in Italy after his death, and met Count V., who fell in love with her to distraction; if she did not love him, she was delighted with his title, and her mother, captivated with his moustache, gave consent to a marriage. At seventeen she was a bride, at eighteen a widow, and now all the English in Milan seem anxious to make her a bride at nineteen.'

'But what has this history to do with the *Amici?*' I inquired.

'Wait a little,' proceeded Macneil. 'She is said to have killed the count; for, the little creature being so selfish that to love any one but herself is an impossibility, he grew miserable at finding his raptures unrequited, pined to a shadow, and a fever, which he caught at Rome, made him an easy prey. Her fortune is very large, but there is no chance of her lavishing it on any one who cannot give her an English title in return.'

'But what has this, I ask again, to do with the *Amici?*'

'Why this,' said Sullivan; 'that all the members of this our band of friends are declared lovers of the Countess V.'

'I should rather have expected to find you disposed to cut each other's throats, than to go shares in an opera-box,' returned I.

'A reasonable expectation enough,' said Ned; 'but the truth is, not one of us cares the value of an opera-ticket about her, nor she about us; so we wisely make common cause of it, and laugh at the little woman in unison.'

'Then you call yourselves *the Friends*, from no other reason than that you are *the Rivals*. Is it so?'

'No: you do not quite catch the joke,' said Macneil. 'When I came to Milan, long before Ned Hayleigh and the rest, I met the fair countess, and fell, to confess the truth, in love with her—real *bonâ fide* love.'

'To which the attractions of her fifty thousand pounds in the three per cents did not add one jot,' said Sullivan.

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'No more they did, for I knew nothing of her fortune. Now she gave me every sort of encouragement—squeezed my hand when we parted—spouted sentiment like a strolling player—told me of her likes and dislikes—cautioned me against this woman and that—made anxious inquiries about my prospects—invited me to her *bijou* of a house; and by so doing, effectually turned my head.'

'What did the woman mean?' said I.

'Perhaps she meant to have some one to wait upon her, to pelt her with compliments on fine eyes and ankles: perhaps—'

'Perhaps,' broke in Sullivan, 'she took a Scotch *laird* for a real live lord, and when your friends called you Strathgowan, she thought you heir apparent to a Scotch peerage.'

'Very true,' said Macneil; 'the little creature is mad upon titles and acres. She would sell herself to old Nick, if he were introduced to her as the Duke of Tartarus. However, I made love to her, and offered myself; she held up her little hands with affected surprise, vowed and protested she had no suspicion of such a thing, and gave me to understand that any return of my affection was out of the question. Though this was rather startling by way of catastrophe to one's first love, I had sense enough left to see that at any rate I was well out of her clutches; I made no comment, but briefly informed her of my intention of leaving Milan. "Why leave Milan?" said my countess. "I shall always be most happy to know you as a friend, and in that view there is no one I would so highly esteem." A man in love is rather vulnerable to civil speeches, and a few reiterations of this made me promise to remain; if I could not be her husband—and perhaps some high principle, remorse, or affection for her departed lord, stood in the way—it was something to be her friend, the friend of such a woman—yes, I would remain.'

'Go on,' said I, impatient to see the drift of the story.

'Soon after I met Sullivan. We talked about the Countess V.; and at last I took him into my confidence, told him of my love and its issue, and how I was the firmest and *chosen* friend of the woman I adored, but could not marry. The major laughed heartily, and disconcerted me not a little. "Forgive my rudeness, but the fact is, that your story is the exact counterpart of what occurred to me, and I too am the *most* esteemed of the countess among her friends." This was startling, but it was exactly true; so I echoed the laugh, though it turned somewhat against myself. Wilson here joined our circle, and the major one day made a bet of a hundred that, if he proposed, the result would be the same.'

'And lost,' said I, 'for the credit of poor human nature.'

'No, by Jove! I won,' said Sullivan, 'and might have done so in half-a-dozen other cases, but one does not like to take advantage of moral certainties.'

'Well,' said Macneil, 'we learnt to enjoy the thing, and set on two or three other fellows to become her friends. At last Sullivan proposed that we should form a club, to be called the *Amici*, no one to be permitted the privileges of membership until he had made love to the countess, and been nominated by her the most esteemed of her friends.'

'So then you have your name, not by virtue of being friends to each other, but to the Countess V.?'

'Exactly,' answered Macneil; 'and now what do you think of the lady?'

'That a woman who can desire to be surrounded closely by men who have longed for her as a wife, is just little better than——'

'Than our worthy patroness,' chimed in Ned Hayleigh. 'Don't croak, Noll; you hardly appreciate the dear creature yet. There are women so fond of admiration that they cannot bear to part with an adorer, and to whom it would be death to see the discarded one swell the train of another fair; yet so conceitedly selfish, that they would never bestow purse and person on one who is not able to give them more than an equivalent—such is our countess. As for love, you might as well expect love from a drumstick.'

'But does she not find out you are laughing at her?' I inquired.

'You do not know how blind one may become through vanity,' said the major. 'She thinks we are all dying for her still, whilst in truth we are only dying of laughter. Did you remark the man who sat in this box when we came in? he is now at her side.'

I looked up, and saw him conversing earnestly with the lady opposite.

'That is Lord Mildworth; he insists on endeavouring to become a member, yet I feel convinced that if he proposes she will accept him at once, without a single hint about friendship. She knows he will be an earl one day soon.'

'And now,' said Hayleigh, 'that you understand the constitution of our society, will you become a member? You know I have become your surety, and if not, shall forfeit my recognizances.'

'The proposal is somewhat novel,' answered I; 'but she must be worth knowing at least, for the rarity of the thing; so introduce me to-night, and you shall have my answer in the morning.'

'Agreed,' said Ned. 'Here, Sullivan!—Sullivan is master of the ceremonies by right of seniority—take him round, and do the proper.'

As we entered the countess's box, Lord Mildworth was just quitting it. I was introduced by Sullivan, who remained for a time, and then lounged away. Now that I had a nearer view of the heroine of my sketch, and patroness of the society, I could not help confessing that it was no wonder men should be fooled and enslaved by one so charming. She was of fair complexion, contrasting well with the blackest of bright eyes; her hair, braided back, showed the contour of a face to which nothing could be objected. Her figure was admirable, but very diminutive; if one had thought of her at one's fireside, it would have been as an ornament to one's chimney piece, not to one's chimney corner. Nor was her conversation inferior to her appearance; under a light and sparkling manner she concealed attainments by no means inconsiderable. Her criticisms on music and musicians

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struck me as, for a woman, quite wonderful; and as she now and then trilled part of an air, to remind me of some opera we were speaking of, which I had forgotten, I could clearly see that her taste and voice were highly cultivated. O woman! woman! if such an outside could cloke a coarse and selfish mind, what shall save men from being deceived and betrayed? All love is a lottery; and the prizes of our hopeful boyhood prove blanks to our manly age. The first indication of something insincere in this beautiful specimen of nature's workmanship was afforded by the *theatrical* manner, that is, by a straining after effect in every word she uttered, ay, even in every position she assumed. Like most vain women too (for *men* sometimes succeed in concealing vanity) she was ever and anon endeavouring to make the conversation turn upon herself, and though this was often adroitly effected, it was not so invariably. But these traits might have passed unnoticed if I had not been prepared for watchfulness by the communicative disclosures of the *Amici*. Before the end of the evening we were making love; talking of Petrarch as if she had been a Laura, and I her lover. As I handed her into her English carriage, she invited me to visit her next day.

Not to weary you—in a week I found I had prosecuted my sham suit so ardently, that all was ripe for what Hayleigh termed my nomination. I had some qualms of conscience at acting a falsehood, even with one whose own creed was so unscrupulous, but these I silenced by the argument that I was contributing to the well-earned punishment of a heartless and cruel woman. In short, the declaration of love was made, and received exactly in the usual form; I was rejected, but consoled by a proffer of friendship to any amouunt. What can such women mean by friendship? What can conception can they form of the word they so constantly profane? Friendship proper dares death, and scorns labour, for the sake of those it has chosen; and such friendship I have witnessed, and can understand. But compare with this the friendship such creatures as the Countess V. have to offer: it is as like the true as Punch is to Hercules.

We knew we had the power of frightening our heroine out of Milan any moment we chose, and as power is often more delightful in *posse* than in *esse*—the consciousness than the exercise—we could scarcely make up our minds to do so. If it had not been for Lord Mildworth, who was to be the next candidate, it is hard to say how long our *Società degli Amici* might have gone on increasing; but he brought the matter to a hurried close. Much struck both with the person and intellectual gifts of the lady, Mildworth entered upon the joke with eagerness and delight; he was in fact a little in love, however he might affirm the contrary. But, a confirmed aristocrat, he had no thoughts of marrying a fruiterer's daughter; and, a man of sound sense, he would have spurned the idea of an union with one who showed such a fondness for being conspicuous, and who was already the laughing-stock of all his acquaintance. Now Major Sullivan was right in his belief that Mildworth had only to ask her hand to obtain it; she had resolved from the first to secure him if possible, and it was the proudest moment of her life that saw him at her feet. On this chance, strange to say, his thoughtless lordship had never calculated, and when he heard a soft and simpered consent to his solicitations, nothing could exceed his surprise, except his embarrassment. The Countess V. must have thought him a gawky lover, for instead of receiving her gentle confession by pressing her incomparable hand to his licensed lips, and whatever else accepted suitors do, he sat on his chair in dumb amaze, revolving in his mind the best means of escape and emancipation; he was what your friend Tollett would call 'planted.' Invention refused to befriend him; and at last, in utter despair, he pressed her hand, gave his forehead a couple of slaps, and rushed from the room, the beautiful Agnes being left in the belief that her last new worshipper was afflicted with temporary derangement.

Peals of laughter saluted Mildworth when he told us his story. Never was description more vivid, never one more applauded, than his of his discomfiture; and his distress was as real at his acceptance, as any other lover's could have been who had undergone the pains of rejection.

'If she find you as cold every day,' said Sullivan, 'she will be forced to own she is beaten at her own weapons.'

'O, never fear,' gasped Hayleigh, just recovering from a convulsion, '"Lord Angelo is precise, stands at a guard with envy, scarce confesses that his blood flows, or that his appetite is more to flesh and blood than stone;" but these cold gentlemen have a good deal of earnestness on occasion. It will be a match yet.'

'Come now, confess,' said Wilson; 'you did kiss her, did you not?'

'Upon my soul, no!' said Mildworth, with an eagerness that renewed our laughter.

'Since the days of Adonis, never was such forbearance!' replied Wilson.

'There will infallibly be work for the lawyers, pursued Major Sullivan. '"Breach of promise of marriage. The Countess V. *versus* John Lord Mildworth. This was an action, &c.; verdict, damages £10,000."'

'A truce with all this,' said Mildworth, somewhat annoyed. 'How am I to get out of the unlucky scrape? I would rather make love to all Milan than that this single affair should get wind.'

'If I had not seen how all might be satisfactorily terminated,' returned Sullivan, 'I for one should not have laughed. But the thing is easy. Wilson is a beautiful draughtsman, and conceived the idea from a volume he has seen, called *Julia's Garland*, which some amorous French duke prepared for his mistress as a love-offering—a plan for showing the countess how well we know her. He has drawn all our pictures, seven in number—yours will make eight—and caused them to be bound in a handsome volume, containing the rules of our little society, set forth in all the pride of caligraphy. This we mean to inscribe "Friendship's Gift," and to present to her ladyship; if you wish it, as I and Oliphant

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sup with her, it shall be done to-night. Depend upon it she will see how ridiculous she has become, and Milan will be too hot to hold her. If you wish to follow her, well and good; if not, I warrant you see her no more.'

'Follow her! I would as soon think of a pilgrimage to Mecca.'

Never shall I forget that night. Sullivan took out the volume from its silken envelope, and promptly handed it to the unsuspecting countess, informing her at the same time that it was the joint gift of her English friends in Milan.

'You men are so vain,' she remarked; 'who would have thought of your giving me your own pictures? Here is a blank border—whose picture is that to contain?'

'Lord Mildworth's. If you will glance through the volume, you will find that none have been admitted but such as have an excuse for this vanity, in having received your own assurance of the highest friendly regard. Those pictures form the gallery of a society created by your ladyship, the rules of which are set forth in the beginning of the volume.'

I saw her, as she read, look bewildered, turn pale, drop the volume, and approach Sullivan as if she meant to strike him; but her rage gave way to mortification and shame, and she sank on an ottoman in violent hysterics. Major Sullivan was cool, as I thought unfeelingly so, for the poor victim seemed alarmingly ill.

'Ring the bell, Oliphant, and let us decamp.' However, I persisted in remaining until her attendants came and she was pronounced somewhat better. It was the last time I saw the Countess V. in Milan; she went, as we predicted, at daybreak the next morning. Sullivan keeps the volume of miniatures as a great curiosity.

This prank was only one of many played by the *Società degli Amici*, which was not broken up by the loss of its patroness, but continued to fulfil its functions for several months. It then died a violent death by dismemberment, not 'regretted by all who knew it,' for the police of Milan had begun to look upon our noisy freaks as not a little disagreeable. Some went north, some south; some sought their homes, and some cared not if they never saw home; and since that time deaths and changes have rendered it certain that on this earth we shall meet no more.

I went to Rome—a city which no young man but must desire to visit—one of the first faces I saw there was that of the little countess: she seemed determined not to recognize me, but I forced her to a nod. As my mode of thinking now that I was alone, was different from that which contact with Ned Hayleigh and Sullivan inspired, I determined to set her at ease about our former intercourse, and its disagreeable reminiscences. I approached, and found her almost in tears.

'Can the Countess V. forgive me, and permit me to forget that we have met before?'

'You cruel, cowardly creature! Will you promise to forget really? There is my hand,' she replied. I was struck with her good-nature, and underwent a pang for my practical joke, though I still felt it was no more than an act of justice. We glided into a conversation on art and artists; and she was as much at home on painting as I had formerly found her on music. An English painter had just put forth a valuable book on art, which she had not read; I had, for it chanced to form one of the last batch I had received from London. To offer a perusal of it to one so competent to appreciate its value was but natural; it procured me in return an invitation to dinner on the following day. But the book was never read, nor the dinner eaten. I returned home, and sought out the volume; and, as my evil star ordained it, it occurred to me to send another parcel of books, still unopened, which my servant at that moment laid on the table, in which I thought the countess might find something worth glancing at. I was terribly sleepy, so I cut the string, broke the seals, but never glanced at the contents; enclosing them all in the parcel containing the work on painting. As I yawned my way to bed, I left orders for the disposal of the books in the morning. Whilst I was at breakfast, every volume was returned, and therewith a note from my heroine, regretting that she could not receive me at dinner. The parcel was torn open in an instant, and it explained all. Twenty-nine numbers of a periodical published some years before, at Penrith in Cumberland, I think, called *the Friend*, was the first item; and the next—could chance have used me more vexatiously?—was a couple of copies of a book of verses, privately printed for gratuitous distribution by an old companion, and bearing the applicable but ill-omened title of *Friendship's Gift*. I looked no further, but dashed the books on the floor; and from that day to this have never seen the pretty, but vain and selfish countess.

MEMOIRS OF AN ITALIAN EXILE.

BY ELI BLACKGOWN, D. D.

THE palace of the bishop of Guastalla was in the main square of the town, opposite to the municipal hall. One of our friends was left to take care of the carriages, and to order fresh horses; the rest, in a body, proceeded to the assault. It was nearly three o'clock in the afternoon, and the servants were taking their meal, in the lower apartments, their master having just risen from the table. We found no porter in the hall, and as, according to the usage of the country, the door was wide open, we left our sentinels at the most important posts, and ascended the lofty staircase. The main body of my little troop was now reduced to three persons, but these were the very men I most implicitly trusted—D'Escrivan, the doctor, and Rodani. We rang the bell at the door of the state apartment, and were somewhat surprised at the long and solemn silence that followed our summons. Finally the door was thrown open, and a young, fair, and blooming little priest or *abate* very civilly asked our business.

'My uncle is taking his afternoon's siesta, I believe,' answered the youth to our inquiries; 'but if you will favour me with your names, I will bring your message.'

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'Nay, we'll bring our message ourselves,' said I; and, according to our preconcerted plan, we all fell upon him, gagged and bound him with our pocket handkerchiefs, and consigned him to the custody of our friend Rodani.

This being done, we proceeded warily from one to the other of the dark, gloomy rooms, till we arrived at the door of a little library.

'Come in,' said a soft, mellow voice, as we knocked at the door, and instantly we rushed into the bishop's presence. D'Escrivan entered first. He held his drawn dagger in his hand. His pale but dark countenance was overshadowed by a fanciful black velvet cap, that gave his naturally bold and fierce look something more overawing and threatening. Caluga, who followed next, was an ugly customer enough, and the pistol which he drew from under his cloak as he entered, and held at arm's length before him, was not calculated to improve his appearance. I entered last, and unarmed.

The bishop was not at his siesta, as his nephew imagined, but busy at his writing-desk—most probably reading his breviary—when his unwelcome guests unceremoniously intruded upon him. He was wrapped in a long, flowing, black gown, but was otherwise dressed in all the attire suited to his rank. He was now, perhaps, in his fortieth year, but looked still youthful and vigorous, and as far as physical strength was concerned, he was more than a match for any two of us. His complexion was fair and rich, and there was between him and his young nephew a family likeness that could not easily be mistaken.

The bishop very naturally imagined that no one but his boy asked for admittance, and he addressed us in German, but startled by the noise of our footsteps, he turned round, and, jumping up from his seat, he uttered a piercing shriek, and gave himself up for lost.

The poor prelate's first impression was, that a gang of assassins had broken in upon him to murder him in his study. The sight of a naked stiletto has something appalling in the sight of a man of the North, who associates with it all its ideas of Italian treachery, cunning, and cowardice. Whether these blemishes are necessarily attached to the character of our people, this is not the most opportune time to discuss; but it could hardly be denied that the populace at Genoa, Rome, and Naples, have been and are more familiar with the use of their knives than either the English or Germans. Whether their partiality for that weapon necessarily implies baseness and perfidy, is altogether a different question. Our artizans and mechanics learned to carry such weapons in times of civil anarchy and oppression, when every one who wore the dress and character of a gentleman was entitled by the laws and usages of the land to carry a sword, which gave him an advantage over the unarmed citizen, and inspired him with an arrogance and insolence to which even our lowest classes, true to their republican reminiscences, were unwilling to submit. The dagger was, therefore, assumed in opposition to the sword, and so far it would be unjust to contend that there was anything dishonest or ungenerous in it. Those who have seen, in the Trastevere at Rome, or in the Porto Franco at Genoa, two of our *facchini* falling upon each other with their clasp-knives, must confess that it is certainly a tremendous, but by no means an unfair play. Nor is a duel between two Mississippians, with their bowie knives, a more treasonable deed than one between two Englishmen with pistols, though both may be equally illegal and unchristian. The poniard has been, no doubt, and may be, used as a fit instrument for assassination; but cannot the same be said of swords, pistols, and every other weapon? Has not the life of Louis Philippe again and again been attempted, without once having recourse to that obnoxious organ of destruction?

Whatever may be said or thought about the subject, certain it is that the bishop of Guastalla, as a good German, was unmanned at once, at the first glimmering of the naked blade that D'Escrivan held in his hand. His very terror nearly cost him his life; for as, overwhelmed by his sudden surprise, after having raised his arms above his head, he threw them both on his table for support, my friends, thinking that he stooped to seize some weapon that might lie before him, rushed upon him, anxious to overcome all resistance.

The truth, however, soon shone with full evidence and the cadaverous paleness that soon spread over the face of our victim, the cold drops that stood on his forehead, and the shiverings that pervaded his limbs, soon made us understand that no violence would be required, and that the prelate was already helplessly in our power.

The hope of bending him to our desires by a little fright did, in fact enter into our plan; and we had good reason to expect that, glad to escape from what he considered immediate destruction, he would soon follow us in resignation and silence.

'Spare me, for God's sake, spare an innocent man!' ejaculated the wretched priest, with an indifferent Italian accent, convulsively grasping the hand that held the dagger. The pistol, that could have scattered his brains at one blow, inspired him with no fear.

'In the name of the law, you are our prisoner,' roared the doctor in a voice of storm.

'You have nothing to fear from us, my lord bishop,' said I, in my softest tone. 'Follow us without resistance, and no harm will befall you. The provisional government want to see you.'

'Ye—ee—es,' muttered his eminence, not greatly reassured; then suddenly raising his voice in a paroxysm of despair—'I am innocent, I am innocent,' said he—'why, in God's name—why would you murder me?'

His shrieks went through my heart, and I wished with all my power never to have embarked in an enterprise in which my nerves were to be put to such an ordeal of pain. Fortunately for us all Caluga threw the skirt of his cloak on the prelate's face, and succeeded in stifling his cries.

'Hush if you care for life,' I then urged. 'No one wishes to twist a hair of your head. You must ride to Parma with us. Such are our orders; but we are also enjoined to treat you with

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the utmost respect. Your eminence is perfectly safe with us, unless you drive us to the most unpleasant extremes. It is in vain you would hope to rouse your servants, or any other man, to your rescue; were even all Germany to start forward in your defence, you will never escape alive from our hands. One more—only one more—of those shrieks, and, by the living God, we plunge our daggers in your bosom—self-defence will compel us.'

The bishop listened and was dumb. He was a reasonable being, and perceiving the uselessness of resistance, and somewhat reassured as to our intentions, he begged to be ungagged, and offered to follow us without further opposition.

My attendants stripped him of his dressing-gown; D'Escrivan helped him to his coat, which was carelessly thrown astride a chair. Caluga quashed his triangular hat on the bishop's head. I offered my arm to him with cavalier gallantry, and we went to the door.

'Let the young gentleman follow us too,' said I to Rodani, who had been left to take care of the bishop's nephew. 'Perhaps his eminence will be glad to have a trusty companion with him by the way.'

We descended the staircase. No alarm had been given. We found our sentinels where we had left them. One of our companions, a provident fellow, had taken care to shut the kitchen door outside, so that, had even the reverend's servants heard of their master's misfortune, they would actually have been prevented from interfering in his behalf. Just as we reached the hall, the postilions were driving up to the door. The steps were let down, and the bishop was forced up into his seat. We jumped in after him, and the door was shut.

The sight of two carriages, each drawn by four post-horses, and calling first at the town-hall, then at the episcopal palace, looked too much like an extraordinary event not to call upon us the attention of the good burghers of Guastalla. A few hundred of them were therefore assembled around us, wondering and questioning each other, but completely unable to divine the meaning of what was taking place before their eyes.

The bishop saw his advantage, and tried to avail himself of the opportunity. The open air, the presence of the townsmen of his own diocese, restored his usual spirits. He made a sudden effort to escape from the doctor's gripe, and cried out with all his might, 'My friends, my good friends:—will you suffer your bishop to be slain before your eyes? Help! Help! I am in the hands of ruffians who are going to murder me!'

The people drew up tumultuously. Our friends raised themselves up in their seats, threw back their cloaks, and cocking the blunderbusses or pistols, which they had hitherto hidden under their garments, turned their muzzles against their assailants. The good people of Guastalla drew back.

'Citizens of Guastalla,' cried I; for since my harangue from the balcony at Parma, I had conceived some relish for the eloquence of the forum; 'beware how you interfere with us! We are agents of government, and you will gain nothing by thwarting us in the discharge of our duties. There has been a battle between our people and the Austrians at Fiorenzola. We have lost a few prisoners, and must have hostages to secure their lives. This, who calls himself your bishop, is only an Austrian, the minion of the profligate woman that has reigned too long over us. Henceforth you shall have no bishop but what you choose for yourselves, and ——'

The audience listened in wonder and perplexity. Discordant cries arose from the motley crowd, and it would have been difficult, in the long run, to foresee whether my words, or their bishop's cries, or the dread of our fire-arms, might have the most powerful influence on their minds. But whilst they kept at some distance, tumultuously deliberating, our postillions threw themselves on their saddles, cracked their whips, and left the gaping crowd still amazed and astounded behind.

As we rode past the town-hall I descried the goodly form of the mayor, who was looking down from the balcony, also wrapped in stupendous astonishment, no doubt scarcely believing that our abduction of one of the great dignitaries of the church could thus take place in full day-light, before so many witnesses, and with scarcely a shade of opposition. I waved my hand towards him with a look of triumph, and wished him a very good appetite for his tripes. Turtle is not familiar among Italian aldermen.

Two hours afterwards we were at the gates of Parma, where a large crowd was assembled, waiting for the result of our expedition.

'Have you got him?' cried the multitude.

'Have we? ay, marry, we have; d'ye think we would ride so far to no purpose?' was our reply.

'Evviva!' shouted the sovereign mob. 'Death to the *Black Bird!* Death to the *Jackdaw!*'

Blackbird and Jackdaw are the by-words at Parma to express hatred and contempt towards the priesthood, evidently an allusion to the sable colour of their robes.

The poor prelate sank back in his seat, for he took those idle shouts *au pied de la lettre*, and expected every moment to be stoned to death, or torn to pieces by the exasperated rabble.

'Mind them not, your eminence,' said I. 'These dogs never bite when they bark. You know our town's-people; you know our neighbour's proverb about us,

'"Parmigiani
Larghi di bocche e stretti di mani."'

A current phrase among the people of the rival cities of the neighbourhood, intended to reflect disgrace upon the character of the good Parmese, as being more prone to make use of their tongues than their hands.

'You are as safe here as you ever were at the court of Schœnbrunn.'

His eminence sighed deeply. The carriage proceeded, though with considerable difficulty, along the thronged streets, till we landed before the palace of our provisional government.

I jumped from my seat, and made my way up to the council chambers.

'My lords, here comes your prisoner. Will you please to let us have your dispositions about him?'

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'Prisoner!' exclaimed Count Carmagnola, with an affected air of surprise. 'Is it, then, true? Have our youth, indeed, dared to carry their threat into execution? Do you mean the Bishop of Guastalla?'

'The some prelate, my lord. But if this has been done without your order or consent, why, the horses are still tied to the carriages, and we can drive him back as easily as we drove him hither.'

'Come, come, count,' interposed Da Costa, with his usual frankness; 'order or no order, the priest is here, and must not escape so cheaply. De Negri, thou art a clever and handy *sbirro*, and we have to thank thee for thy pains. Take that black raven to the Hôtel de la Poste, which we have destined for his prison; we will set a few of our smart lads as a body-guard about him, and ere evening I will myself have the honour of a *tête-à-tête* with thy prisoner.'

We drove round to the hotel. The bishop was shown up to the best apartment. We stationed ourselves at the door, and by dint of persuasion dispersed the assembled mob. Presently a detachment of national guards came to relieve us, and we were free for the night.

Da Costa closeted himself with the bishop, and, strong in his commanding and forbidding countenance, availing himself of the terror and consternation in which our prisoner had been thrown by the events of the day, brought him passively and completely under his control.

His eminence wrote to his lady and mistress, quondam his penitent, Maria Louisa, stating how he had fallen into the hands of lawless rebels and merciless anarchists; that it was only owing to a miracle of Heaven if he had hitherto escaped assassination and violence; and ended by supplicating her to use her prisoners with discretion and humanity, as long at least as his head was there to answer for the consequences. This letter, carefully revised, duly folded and sealed, was immediately sent by express to its destination.

CHAPTER XVI.

Doubts and Misgivings.

'Lo cose della Guerra andavan zoppe.'

I REMEMBER to have been told—the tale is rather free, but there is sound moral at the bottom of it—of a jolly middle-aged gentleman, to whose care a young buxom widow was intrusted during part of her continental tour. They arrived one evening, and were obliged to put up at a wretched-looking inn on the Pyrenees, which boasted only of one bed-room for the accommodation of strangers. Of that apartment the lady, of course, took immediate possession, and her gallant escort was to pass the night on one of the hard benches in the kitchen of the dingy posada.

It was in the heart of winter. Their supper had been cold and unsubstantial; the fire waxed faint and low; the mountain-wind howled dismally through the crannies of that shattered abode, and altogether there was every prospect of a cheerless night.

Our fair traveller was tender and compassionate, as widows proverbially are. Her cavalier had during their journey proved a faithful, attentive, agreeable companion. The posadero and his family had retired for the night, and they were alone, crouching to the fading embers, close to each other. It was a trying moment. Trembling with cold as much as with the violence of his emotions, the gentleman sued, begged, whispered, hinted, wondered — whether that spare bed might not be large enough to hold two.

The lady, be it remembered, never said yes. On the contrary, she frowned and stared; she protested against the impropriety of the thing. She was rather ready, she declared, since he showed so much selfishness, to give up bed and chamber to him. Still she suffered him to rise when she rose, to carry her candle and show her to her room; then there was something that he had to unpin or unclasp for her. Briskly and gleefully did the comfort-loving fellow skip about as he performed all the duties of an attentive *soubrette*. In short, it seemed that he had fairly carried the point, and that the day, or rather the night was his own, when, all at once, struck with a sudden thought, he smote his forehead.

'La! I was forgetting my nightcap!'

He hurried to the kitchen, fumbled for less than a minute in his carpet-bag, and was soon back at the door of the widow's apartment.

The door was bolted!

With dropping jaw, with cap in hand, stood the hapless wight, like Adam at the gate of Paradise. But as he well knew the humour of the person he had to deal with, he resigned himself to his fate without further entreaties and remonstrances, and repaired to his uncomfortable couch, muttering something about the folly of giving a woman even two seconds for reflection, or allowing an opportunity to escape.

Everything in this sublunary world depends on the acmé of the moment. Every oscillation of the pendulum brings with it a new combination of circumstances, and what was not only practicable, but easy at the expiration of the eleventh hour, becomes utterly impossible when the hour has struck.

There was a time, I hope I have sufficiently dwelt upon all the particulars to have satisfactorily demonstrated it, when even with the scanty means that were within our reach, it might have been in our power to secure the triumph of the national cause. A moment had been when, in the elation of their first success, our youths believed themselves equal to the most desperate undertaking, and in the strength of their faith they would have thought no more of rowing across the Po, than Cæsar of springing across the Rubicon. But the critical moment had gone by. Afraid of that exuberant, no less perhaps than ephemeral enthusiasm, and wishing to shelter their heads under the nightcap of the Non-Intervention, the members of our provisional government had tampered with that juvenile ardour and confidence, had given it time to slacken and cool, and afforded leisure for reflection, repining, and despondency.

The arrest of the Bishop of Guastalla was the last sign of life, the last decisive act of aggression on the part of the rebels of Parma against

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their dethroned sovereign's abettors and favourites Henceforth, if nothing was absolutely done to propitiate Maria Louisa's good will, nothing at least was attempted that might tend to awake her farther displeasure, or raise new obstacles against future reconciliation.

A long period of hesitancy and expectation ensued. The good people of Parma continued in the tranquil but improvident enjoyment of their cheaply-gotten liberty, endeavouring to trouble themselves as little as they could with the contingencies of the future. The military spirit of our champions had abated. They still suffered themselves to be mustered on the main square in idle parade, and even went through the routine of their manœuvres; but the orders given for green uniforms were suspended. The subscription opened for the purchase of English muskets was unproductive, and it was evident that faith had been shaken in the hearts of many, and that they would not venture any farther till they had taken a calmer view of the matter, and seen how things would ultimately turn out.

The old and wary shook their heads, and looked grave and mysterious. The selfish and cowardly contrived to get out of the scrape as expeditiously as they had got into it. A few of the young and hearty were also withdrawn from our ranks through interference of paternal authority, or weaned from the turmoil of public life through the suasive arts of maternal caresses. I remember a young comrade who had slightly hurt his foot in his hasty retreat from Fiorenzola. His mother bribed a surgeon, who, under pretence of healing, converted that trifling bruise into a painful sore, and confined the young hero to his bed till the tempest was over.

The crowded streets were gradually thinned and hushed. Order was restored without effort. The country gentlemen rode back to their homes, the tradesmen repaired to their shops.

Not that any man was more willing to part with sweet liberty, either for love or money. Every one was as happy as in the day of Tacitus, when

'Sentire quæ velis, quæ sentis dicere licet.'

Pamphlets, newspapers, bills, proclamations, were issued from the press with unabating activity. Demagogues were thundering still from their rostrums; 'Virginia,' 'the Pazzi,' and 'Timoleon' were given every night on the stage. The 'Romagnola' and all her sister songs gladdened the air from sunset to sunrise. No one, in fact, dreamed of finding fault with that convenient order, or disorder, of things; they only felt less sanguine and cheerful about its durability.

Still there was a class of men who either would not, or thought they could not, draw back with the rest. These were especially the students, and other youths who had shone more conspicuously, who had shouted more clamorously, during the events of the 13th of February; who had bullied Maria Louisa in the very hall of her palace. This one, it was said, had been the first to appear with a tricoloured badge in his hat. The other's cockade was preposterously larger than the rest of his set. There was a young physician, who had pulled the nose of the duchess's president of the council: a young lawyer, whose green spectacles had haunted Maria Louisa's fancy ever since he appeared before her at the head of a deputation to signify to her the good pleasure of the university. These and many others were designated by public report as the most efficient instruments of the insurrection, or its stanchest supporters and partizans: for these, it was whispered, there was no chance of escape. Children of the revolution, they must triumph or perish with it. The return of their outraged mistress must bring them death or banishment. They were called 'I Compromessi,' men who had committed themselves so far that it was as dangerous for them to draw back as to rush on with the courage of despair.

Of the persons so pointed out, there were some that hoped still to shrink from a notoriety which they had once courted so eagerly, to sink into that multitude from which they had hitherto so strenuously striven to emerge, to shun that public gaze in which they were formerly so happy to bask: but there were others again who scorned all cautiousness and restraint, men who boasted to have broken with the old government beyond all chances of reconciliation, who prided themselves on their unswerving consistency, who were determined to uphold the revolution at any rate, and scrupled no more to involve their town and country, than their own persons, goods and chattels, in its ruin.

In this band of forlorn hopes I was, partly from choice, partly through necessity, enlisted. Not that I would as freely have lavished other people's lives and property as I would have parted with mine,—not that I could think without a shudder of the work of devastation and plunder to which any bootless resistance might expose our helpless people—not that I was ignorant of the awful retribution with which popular insurrections had been visited by the French and Austrian soldiery during the late wars, or that I had not read Botta's description of the horrors perpetrated at the sacks of Lugo, Binasco, Pavia, and Verona;—but I thought that, even if it were proved that our premature attempt could be attended with no success, even were we to confess that that revolt was all a mistake,—or, to borrow an aristocratic phrase from Prince George of Cambridge, all 'no go,' still it was our bounden duty—it was the sacred duty of all whose life was not absolutely necessary—and if we come to that, after all, whose life can be said to be indispensable in the world?—to expiate that rash deed, to atone for that error, by the sacrifice of a few hundred victims with whose blood could be written, on the gates of our surrendering town, 'Tout est perdu fors l'honneur!'

Of these few hundred devoted volunteers, it seemed to me that I had full right to be one. To these arguments, dictated by generous impulses, other more selfish reasons must be added, more immediately arising from the peculiarity of my situation. I was, be it remembered, a runaway prisoner, and the very mildest treatment I might meet with at the hands of Maria Louisa's government, at her return, would be to be sent back to that fortress of which the rebels

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had so illegally broken open the gates. Moreover, my harangue from the *tribuna*, and the arrest of his eminence of Guastalla, might be construed into demagogical incendiarism and murderous aggression; and even if they had not thought me worth my rope, they might perhaps have spared me more of their hard bread and water than I cared to feast upon.

Now, whether shut up at Compiano or Spielberg, or banished to Paris, or London, Jerusalem, or Seringapatam, one thing was clear, that I had done breathing the same air with Marina, and there was no death I then thought not a thousand times preferable to the eventuality of a second parting with her.

Fixed upon so laudable a purpose, and looking upon myself as a devoted being, I began to feel more lukewarm, and to take a less active share in public transactions. I went to Pasteri's reading-rooms to hear the thousand and one absurdities of our politicians, walked to the main square at sunset to hear the 'Romagnola' played by our bands, and repaired to Judge Cornaro's, into whose peaceful abode, however, the bustle of political discussion had also found its way; so that, in despair of finding even there rest and comfort, I took my leave, and, for a wonder, went home to have supper and a chat with my sister Louisa.

A short but lively sensation was produced about that time by a proclamation from Piacentia, signed by our once beloved sovereign and mistress, Maria Louisa, who, for the first time after nearly three weeks, giving at last symptoms of life, offered a free and ample pardon and oblivion of the past, provided her erring subjects would voluntarily and immediately return under her maternal sway; at the same time launching forth in threats and invective against them if they showed themselves obdurate in their sin, and persevered in their insubordination and treason. This ducal mandate our provisional government thought it their duty to reprint and publish, adding, however, by way of commentary, a long apology for their own conduct; enumerating the grievances by which the old rulers had provoked popular dissatisfaction and violence; dwelling on the necessity that had placed them at the helm of a state which had been left a prey to disorder and anarchy; and concluding by an appeal to the people, whom they invited to pronounce between them and their mistress.

The proclamation was read from the 'ringhiera,' amidst the roaring and hissing of the infuriated populace. All the terms of ignominy, with which our Parmese dialect is peculiarly rich, were freely heaped upon the person of the absent duchess; the boldest demagogues jumped upon the balcony, snatched the official paper from the hands of the terrified herald, and threw its fragments among their friends, who trampled them under their feet with an air of scorn and defiance.

And, truly, even the most sober persons could not refuse themselves to the belief, that such a powerless demonstration would not have been resorted to by the exiled duchess, had she not been utterly at a loss how to recall her people to allegiance by more efficient means. It was quite plain that Francis of Austria dared not or would not do anything for his daughter, that she was left to deal with her subjects as she best could, and that her Germans could not extend their protection any further than the Piacentine garrison and territory.

The leniency, also, which, as if influenced by the letter of the bishop of Guastalla, the duchess showed to her prisoners, confirmed the idea that her only chance of winning back her metropolis depended on mild and conciliatory measures. For not only had the less fortunate heroes of Fiorenzola been rescued from the dungeons of the citadel, and lodged in more comfortable quarters, but, yielding to the importunity of the most conspicuous citizens of Piacentia—who, by their generous and daring conduct, fully refuted the ill-grounded notions still entertained by foreigners concerning the mutual jealousies and deep-seated rancours which are still said to exist between the different Italian towns, a consequence of their ancient municipal grudges—Maria Louisa was compelled to allow them to alleviate her victims' confinement by every kindness that the most ardent sympathy could suggest, till, wearied with their daily petitions, and dreading lest their remonstrances should finally assume a bolder and more peremptory tone, she determined on the release of the prisoners, and, to our great surprise, allowed them, one after another, to re-enter our walls.

This last stroke of policy ended by completely upsetting our politicians' understanding. It was now proved beyond all doubt that no hostility was contemplated; since, had Austria ever thought of attacking us, would she have suffered those youths, who had shown themselves willing and valiant combatants, once more to join the insurrectional ranks?

Similar illusions spread an equally deplorable security and apathy among our neighbours of Modena and Romagna. Our natural allies had at first been startled by the report of the skirmish at Fiorenzola, and the bravest among them had burned with a vehement desire to march to our succour; but no sooner had the threatening storm so unaccountably vanished away, than their non-intervention hallucination regained its ascendency, and they relapsed, as we did, into lethargy and inaction.

A general council from all the towns of Romagna was convoked at Bologna, with a view to deliberate on the *déchéance* of the Pope and his temporal government, whilst the insurrectionary bands, slowly but irresistibly carrying everything before them, marched against the metropolis of Christendom.

They had already reached Otricoli, and were encamped at the distance only of thirty miles from Rome, when a messenger of St. Aulaire, the French minister, intimated to their leader not to proceed one step further, as they cared for the protection and valued the alliance of France.

The insurgents halted!

Whilst their military operations came thus to a dead stand in the south, no provisions were made against the dangers that menaced us from the north. All efforts on the part of Modena and Parma to enter into a coalition with Ro-

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magna were unsuccessful—not, indeed, because any good patriot there longed less than any of us for Italian independence and unity, but because they feared that the imprudent manifestation of such a purpose would give unnecessary alarm to the Austrians, and afford them pretexts for interference.

Only one link of union between the three states existed, in the person of their common military ruler. General Zucchi had, on the first heat of welcome, been equally saluted as generalissimo of all the forces of the insurgents; and as he, being a stranger to the secret proceeding which had brought about our revolutionary movement, knew nothing of the timid and evasive policy that presided over our councils, he issued immediate orders for an *Italian national army*, of which Parma was to furnish the first legion.

His plan of defence—for attack was, for the moment, out of the question—was notified to our provisional government. Parma and Modena were considered as too helplessly exposed to sudden inroads to offer any chance of efficacious resistance. Consequently, our national guard and regular forces, at the first attack, were to evacuate the town, and fall back upon Modena; and hence, again, they were to repair to Bologna, which was intended as our military centre, and which, by its position and population, had more than once kept at a distance even larger armies than the Austrians at present could muster.

This system was perhaps rational and plausible; but our old general took it for granted—what seemed natural enough—that the Austrians would begin their operations with the Parmese, and that nothing would be easier for them than to retreat to the eastward, in proportion as we were pressed from the west. There was the blunder.

One evening—it was on the sixth or seventh of March, 1831—a vague rumour was spread at Parma, that the Duke of Modena had effected the occupation of his capital; a few hours later the tidings were, that his highness and his troops had been routed by the patriots, and the tricolour standard again waved from the top of the Ghirlardina;* next it was bruited that Austrians were seen on duty at the gates of Reggio, and that that town, as well as every other in the duchy, was declared in a state of siege.

In the morning it was reported that the black and yellow standard floated on the bridge of the Enza.

I walked to the Palazzo del Governo, and sued for an audience.

'Strange rumours are afloat, my lords; every minute we hear most contradictory news. Our people are mad with anxiety and alarm, and, what is more provoking, the authors of these reports are nowhere to be found. Trust me for once. Suffer me to ride out on an exploring excursion. I promise you never to come back without satisfactory information.'

'Well, go, and God be with thee,' said my friend Da Costa.

I hastened home and saddled my Hungarian. I hid my pistols under my riding cloak, and rode up to the Porta San Michele.

'There goes De Negri,' cried one of the people. 'The storm thickens, and he takes to his heels.'

'Hush, for shame!' said another. 'He is a *Compromesso*, and who could blame him if he seek to provide for his safety?'

'Nay, nay, my good friends,' I replied bitterly, 'know you not whither this road leads? I am going to call on the Austrians, and to throw them this gauntlet on your part.'

So saying, I gave my charger the spur, and galloped away.

* A steeple at Modena—one of the highest in Italy.

HOW TO MAKE GOLD.

BY EDEN LOWTHER.

Our London was *then* some few hundred years younger than it is now. When was *then?* Why, on a certain dull dusky evening, when a young stripling in a velvet suit, and a diamond buckle in his cap, and shoes turned up at the toes, and with all the rest of the appendages of an exquisite of that century, turned into a certain antiquated, grotesquely-carved, low-fronted shop, and bade them bring him a jewelled chain, much as if he had thought gems of no better worth than pebbles.

Now it is very certain that those who think much of themselves are sure to make others take them at their own valuation; and thus it was, that whilst our gallant was most obsequiously being shown rubies, and pearls, and emeralds, in their finest and fairest settings, and as humbly as though they were altogether unworthy of his worthiness, a certain humble individual, albeit a woman, who was standing in one corner of the shop, evidently valuing herself at the smallest amount possible, in a very shabby brokerly sort of estimation, was on the same rule hurried and flurried, and shuffled from one side to the other, proving beyond a doubt that the master jeweller and his apprentices thought as little of her as she did of herself.

Dear reader, take a hint. Value yourself up to your highest amount, and others will do so too. Mind, I did not tell you to value yourself beyond it.

The eye of his worship, our gallant, being perhaps somewhat dazzled by the sight of the jewels, had not rested upon the dim figure in the corner until, by an accidental movement, he suddenly discovered that this statue-like automaton piece of womankind had a pair of eyes set in her head brighter, more radiant, more glorious, richer and rarer, than all the jewels in Master Jeweller's shop.

Of course those who are wishing to possess the best of everything immediately disregard all inferior things. The diamonds were now no better than bits of glass, the emeralds dull stones, and the pearls nothing but the signs of disease in vulgar, low-bred, eatable fish. The

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gallant had eyes for nothing but the possessor of those brilliant gems, and he began to survey her with all his own. Howbeit those orbs flashed no more upon him, the head was bent, and the whole attitude was impressed with the speaking expression of a *felt* degradation. Nothing could be more injurious to grace than this, for ease must ever be a part of grace. And then for dress! what daughter of Eve ever wore a shabbier black gown or a more threadbare cloak? and perhaps it was the shame of this shabbiness that made the owner of those eyes hang down her head, and draw the folds of her old veil more thickly down, and cower away from the sight, not only of our gay youth, but of Master Jeweller and his apprentices.

'Here be diamonds from Golconda, fit for the crown of the king's majesty, set in the newest and the rarest fashion,' said Master Jeweller; 'what says your worship to this new taste?'

'Thou and I, Master Jeweller, ought to take shame and blame to ourselves, inasmuch as a lady stands by, who is fairer than all the jewels in the world, disregarded, whilst thou and I are chaffering for baubles. I pray thee take the lady's pleasure.'

'Not so,' said the maiden, shrinking more into the corner and herself. 'I will abide your leisure, Master Jeweller.'

'Then art thou at leisure now, Master Jeweller. Thou doest nothing more for me till thou hast obeyed this lady's will;' and so saying the gallant affected to retire to the other extremity of the shop, and pretended neither to see nor to hear, whilst all the while he was looking with all his eyes, and listening with all his ears.

The maiden trembled from head to foot. She internally wished herself in any out-of-way place of the earth, in any nook or corner, almost at the bottom of the sea, (people sometimes wish *rather* injudiciously,) in fact, anywhere, without being at all particular, so that she were out of her present corner in that jeweller's shop. Feeling, however, that escape was impossible, she began to consider what was the next best thing; and not being at all handy at subterfuge, or ready-witted at evasion, she made up her mind at once that the best thing, because it was the only one, was to transact her business as expeditiously as might be, and then abscond out of that disagreeable corner as quickly as possible. On which most wise and magnanimous consideration and resolution, she forthwith proceeded to draw from her bosom a very antiquated, cumbrously-fashioned ring, and though the hand that held it out blushed rosy red to the very tips of its fingers, to present it to the jeweller, and in a low, hesitating husky voice to stutter out—'What might you be willing to—to—afford for that, Master Jeweller?'

Master Jeweller took the ring, and of course looked at it as though it were very trashy indeed, mere trumpery, much as Rundell and Brydge might look on mosaic gold, and exactly as all people look on the things which they are asked to buy, which is of course just in the very contrary way to that they put on when they mean to sell.

'Good sooth, I believe me this ruby is flawed,' said the jeweller; 'and as for the setting, it is altogether so marvellously bad that it must be melted down. The fashion is execrable—antediluvian—as old as Adam.' (Adam was thought quite as old-fashioned in those days as in ours.) 'How much want you for this crazy ring?'

'It is antique,' said the maiden, with a sigh; 'my father therefore said that the worth was the higher. It hath been long in our family, and they say that the gem is a rare one.'

'Ay, people, when they carry their goods to market, always cry a great bush. But, at a word, for his lordship waits, five marks is the highest I will give you, mistress.'

'Hath it no higher worth?' exclaimed the maiden, in very sorrowful tones.

'I will adjudge this matter, Master Jeweller,' said the youth, advancing. 'I have an admirable skill in jewels. I could estimate to a penny the crown of our liege lord the king. I know at a glance the water and the worth of a diamond. I know the weight of a stone without thy scales and balances—thy rubies, and thy emeralds, and thy topazes, thy onyx, and sardonyx, and sapphires, there is no deceiving me in any of these things. Hand over to me the ring, and I will tell thee the real valuation which thou shalt render to this lady; and let me tell thee, Master Jeweller, she does thee no small grace in coming hither to traffic with thee her own fair self.'

The maiden drew her veil more closely round her, and averted her face more determinately as the young gallant stood stooping by her side, hoping to catch a second edition of her voluminous look.

'Five marks!' exclaimed the gentleman. 'Good sooth! thou art either a blind man, or a knave, Master Jeweller. Say rather, twenty!'

The jeweller lifted up his eyes, and the maiden lifted up hers. The youth went on eulogizing either her jewels of eyes, or her jewel of a ring—he knew best himself.

'A flaw, saidst thou? why, man, thy eyesight is flawed! Such jewels as these never was it my lot to meet with before. Five marks, saidst thou?—thou shouldst have offered thirty!'

Again the maiden's eyes flashed upwards.

'Why, in good truth, I am almost as blind as thou. What beauty! what water! what lustre! what form! what splendour! Would I not give a throne for such gems as thine! Come, we will say five-and-thirty marks.'

'Your worship is demented,' said the jeweller.

The maiden had by this time almost forgotten her own desire of remaining under her obscurity and personally unknown, and looked up in the young courtier's face, utterly forgetful that he was gazing in her own.

'Beautiful! spotless! fair!—the workmanship of a most divine hand. I would it were mine own! Master Jeweller, thou shalt count out to this lady forty marks of gold;—nay, never wince, man, I will guarantee thy gain upon it. Fair madam, will this content you?'

'I am much beholden to your worship,' said the maiden, curtseying low, while a fresh flush

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of the bright red current of life dyed her brow again bright ruby red.

At a sign from the young cavalier, the jeweller paid down the forty golden marks, which the maiden hastily gathered up, with a degree of avidity rather strongly developed, and, drawing her veil more closely round her, with a low reverence to Master Jeweller, and a lower to the young gallant, she glided out of the shop.

'I will see thee again, Master Jeweller,' said his young worship. 'Take care of my newly-purchased ring, and to-morrow I will give thee thy guerdon;' and so saying, the youth departed as though he was in haste, and—of course, quite by accident—happened to take the same course as the damsel.

Somewhere about a stone's throw from the venerable palace of his grace of Canterbury, within sight of the weathercock, and almost within sound of the ticking of the old church clock of St. Mary's, stands a row of old fashioned, crumbling-away houses, with very low doors, and deeply sunken windows, and high-pointed roofs, the faces of which look into a particularly narrow street, as yet unmodernized in its pavement, being neither macadamized nor asphaltumized, and having nothing but cobbles the wrong side upwards for both man and beast to walk upon, and being faced by a row, on the opposite side, as like unto themselves as though they had been cast in the same mould, and were brethren of the same family, or like peas taken out of the same shells, or like their own reflection in a looking-glass. However, we have no intention of carrying our readers into the mansions of that side of the way. *Our* side had a profile that looked out upon the windings and the wanderings, and the washings and the splashings, and the fumings and the frettings, and the passions and the pettings, and the comings and the goings, of our great-grandfather Thames, who went hurrying and fussing backwards and forwards, going his errands from one end of the town to the other, and, furthermore, into the country, day after day, seeming as if he would never get tired, and, at the time of which we are speaking, just bringing up a little wherry, rowed by a couple of sturdy retainers, with certain glittering badges on their arms, who, having brought up their bark to some certain ill-fashioned ungainly steps, covered with mud, which led, by a particularly crooked, lame-making road, to the afore mentioned street, paused to allow a certain silent, sentimental, or sulky youth to disembark, and kick his way with the points of his toes on the points of the cobble-stoned pathway.

'Wait my return,' said the youth, very much in the tone of a master—and masters have rather a particular tone sometimes—'wait here till I return.'

'And a pretty wait we are likely to have of it!' muttered the two men to each other, taking, however, most particular care that the gentleman as above should not hear them. 'Master Spencer has gone fishing for stars with his hook and line, and we shall have plenty of time to catch plenty of colds before he comes back.'

'Yes; and without any hook or line, by which I suppose you mean fine speechifying, and looks like sugar candy, we shall just catch as many stars here, swimming in the old river, as he will with the help of his clerk-hip and books:' and, as he spoke, the elder servitor pointed to the bright reflections of the stars, mirrored in their silent beauty on the face of the calm river.

'And why?' said the younger oar. 'He is a gainly youth, likely enough to make women look after him—ay, marry, and even run after him, for the matter of that.'

'True enough,' replied his comrade, 'with the feather in his cap, and his embroidered cloak—women have a mighty good taste in men when they wear jewels—but Master Spencer will find himself marvellously passed over in a grey suit and a student's cap. See you not that he has laid aside his bravery, and has made himself as mean in his outward man as some thrifty housewife's seventh son. Pah! that's never the way to make women look after him! If he had asked *me*, I could have told him a better tale than that.'

'And much chance there is of his asking thee or me!' said the other ironically.

'He has a sufficiently pretty knack of getting his own way, without asking other people at all about it,' responded the other; 'but mother wit told me to coax a flask of wine out of the cellar, to amuse ourselves withal—so here's to thee to begin with.'

Meanwhile Master Spencer picked his way over the wrong-ended cobbles up the old-fashioned street, and passing house after house of their wrinkled and antiquated physiognomies, paused at last, with an air of most accurate precision, before a particular and identical one, which he seemed to be able to discern from the others remarkably well, and in another minute or so he had managed to penetrate into a dark, dim-lit chamber, which we may suppose he had often been in before, as nothing about it seemed to strike him with any newness or surprise. An old grey-haired man was sitting at a small table, the wrinkles of time being underlined with the wrinkles of thought. He was thin and cadaverous, and his worn-out garments were hanging loosely on his emaciated limbs, while an air of intense anxiety pervaded his countenance, and an unceasing restlessness his person. On the opposite side of that narrow table sat a bluff man, whose comely face had been sunned by some thirty summers, and who seemed to have found this world of ours a remarkably easy one to travel through, judging from the excellent stock of self-complaisance which he had accumulated on his journey. Nine-tenths of the women of England, and we are bound to allow them to be the best judges in the world, would have pronounced him handsome—a judgment which he would have considered strictly correct—but the one-tenth would have paused and considered, and turned away with a curled lip, and said that they would leave the man to his own good opinion—he possibly ate too much—or he drank too much—he was too round and too short; and he did not think enough, nor feel enough; and he might do well enough for others, but not for them;—and

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this opinion was evidently that of a maiden who was sitting in the corner of the room, as far away from the gentleman in question as the limit of their domicile allowed, pretending neither to see him when he looked nor hear him when he spoke.

The entrance of Master Spencer produced various effects on the different personages in that dull, dusky, ill-furnished room. The countenance of the old man brightened upon the youth, that of his comely visitor darkened, whilst the face of the young girl, after its flashing joyousness, changed alternately from the semblance of red light to that of white writing-paper.

Master Spencer doffed his student's cap, and saluted the old man courteously.

'How fares it with you, Master Aylmer? and you, my bright-eyed Margaret?'

'Call nothing yours till you have got it,' said the bluff gentleman.

'Ah, Master Smeaton, so art thou there again! Wouldst teach me a croaking raven's note? Call nothing mine till I have got it, saidst thou? In good sooth I will; and as many things as I desire, I will not only call mine, but make mine. They shall be mine by anticipation till they are mine by possession.'

'Speak thus of the things that thou canst buy!' said Master Smeaton, angrily.

'And what can I not buy?' replied the young student.

'Canst thou buy woman's love?' said Smeaton, glancing at Margaret—'and will she not feel the injury of so mean a thought.'

'It is thine own thought that is the injury, putting so mean a value on the price which thou couldst offer. Yes, I would even buy woman's love. But how? You, fair Margaret, shall be judge between us;' and Master Spencer approached the maiden, and assailing her with eyes that needed no dictionary to explain their meaning, spoke in a honeyed tone—'Maiden, may not love be bought? and would not your sex be satisfied with the price of every thought, of every hope, of every feeling; of days spent in treasuring up every word that you might utter, every glance that you might speed; and of nights devoted, not to dull sleep, but to counting over the jewels of memory thus garnered up? And then for actions, as a part of the purchase-money;—actions that should shield you from every grief; interpose between you and every cloud, every trouble, every shade; actions which should know nothing of self but to fence you round with an embrasure of love on every side! What say you, Mistress Margaret—might not love be even bought with such a price as this?'

'The love of a queen!' murmured Margaret.

'Good sooth!' exclaimed Smeaton, 'is it the fashion in these days for the young gallants to make open court to the maidens in the very eyes of their kindred and acquaintance? In my time, and that is not far gone by, such things were whispered in secret, and not brazened and blazoned abroad like the singing of some flaunting ditty; if they had been so, maidens would have flouted, and fathers would have frowned.'

'Maidens can frown in these days, Master Smeaton,' said Margaret; and to prove which, for his particular benefit, she suited the action to the word in right good earnest.

'Girls are ever fond of gewgaws,' muttered Smeaton; 'but for grave, wise-going men—why, Master Spencer, are you for saying that sage, pains-taking men are to be bought?'

'Ay, bought,' replied Spencer to him; and then turning respectfully to the old man—'their good opinion is to be bought by reverence, by submission, by the affection, and the duty of a son.'

The old man's face become more composed, more tearful as his eye melted into kindness in looking upon Spencer, and he answered Smeaton—'The youth is a good youth, Master Smeaton, an you knew him better.'

'And how long may you have known him to find it out?' asked Smeaton scornfully. 'A few summer days hath he fluttered his butterfly wings around you, and now you count more of him than the well-worn friendship of years.'

'Nay, Master Smeaton,' said the old man, 'the youth hath delved deep into occult sciences, and thou knowest that I have dabbled therein mine own self; it is therefore that I count much of Master Spencer; and Margaret, good child, thinks gently of him for my sake.'

'For his own, thou shouldst rather say,' said Smeaton, with a great spice of spleen; 'and for thy sciences, why, Master Aylmer, is he such a knave as to lead thee blindfold into that bog—that quagmire?'

'Master Smeaton, thy wayfaring life hath led thee altogether apart and away, so that thou canst not even see the great object which the greatest and the wisest men of the world have been so long striving after; but Master Spencer has been spending his youth in the grave study of the adept.'

'Good faith!' exclaimed Smeaton—'as if there were any other way of making gold than by working for it, or fighting for it, or in the way of the merchant, or the seafaring man!'

'Ay, these are the ways, the every-day, well-trodden ways of men of homely wits; but then there are men whose minds, exploring the angelical roads of science, find among the higher mysteries that the baser metals may be transmuted into gold.'

'And Master Spencer edges you on unto these fooleries, doubtless for his own craftiness?'

'Thou callest these sublimities by such irreverent names, because thou art altogether in the dark both of their spirit and essence. Master Spencer, good youth, hath none of the craftiness of the invention, though he hath a rare knowledge of the influences of certain herbs and minerals, and the aspects of the heavenly bodies; but the sublime science of alchemy was, as far as my poor knowledge goes, cultivated by the wise men of Arabia, the Greeks also, and even the Chinese.'

'Give me patience, Master Aylmer! What crotchets are these that are sticking in your brain? What need have you to look after a lot of antediluvian fools, and walk in their footsteps?'

'It becomes not us to speak thus disparagingly of our forefathers; they were wise men, and they knew that under certain of the heavenly influences of the planets—'

'Fooleries of the planets—for you seem to me moon-struck!—or, rather, fooleries of Mas-

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ter Spencer here, for he seems to be leading you, for purposes of his own, like a very will-o'-the-wisp!'

'Master Smeaton,' said Spencer, 'it seems to me that you are making more free than welcome with a name which my father left in my keeping; and my senses, which, such as they are, are mine to make the best of; I beg of thee, therefore, to find some fairer subject that we may joust upon, for I protest to thee, that, notwithstanding my various professions of gold-making and love-making, I am at perfect leisure to quarrel with thee, and am now at thy entire service.'

'Thou art but a pert stripling,' exclaimed Smeaton, 'and I confess that it angers me, and makes my blood hot, to see thee thus deluding a weak maiden, and misleading a blind man.'

'Dost thou dare to call my Margaret weak, and her father blind?' said Spencer. 'Thou art altogether unworthy of grace from either!'

Margaret pouted her pretty lip, and the old man knitted his brows. Young girls never yet took it as any compliment to be called 'weak,' any more than old men like to be deemed 'blind.'

'Thou knave! thou cheat! thou deluder!' exclaimed Smeaton. 'Thou knowest full well that thou art only aiding and abetting the phantasies of my old friend, Master Aylmer, on purpose that thou mayest delude him of his girl!'

'Thou hast hit upon a sensible meaning,' replied Spencer, 'but hast managed altogether to deface it with thy vilifying words. I disclaim not thy interpretation, nevertheless, in a fairer aspect. And where is the shame of recommending myself to a duteous daughter by means of respectful and honourable service to the father whom she loves?—and Master Aylmer himself will bear me witness that I do no more.'

'The youth is a good youth,' murmured the old man.

'He is blinding their eyes with the dust of vanity!' exclaimed Smeaton. 'Me he cannot blind, and he is therefore cheating me with mine eyes open. Master Aylmer, thou wert wont to be an honest man, and wilt thou now gainsay thine own plighted word? Thou didst promise me that, when I came back from this venture, thou wouldst teach that girl a reason why she should not thus frown and coil herself away from me. Art thou willing to keep thy word, I ask of thee?'

The old man looked in an agony; the twitchings of his face, and the nervousness of his whole body, increased almost to an agony.

'I promised thee that if my labour in the angelical science had succeeded—and I was even then on the brink of success—that I would pay thee that which I owed thee;—but alas! an unlucky accident'—the old man's voice trembled, and he broke off.

Smeaton smiled maliciously. 'Well, and otherwise?'

'Otherwise, I said that I would beg of my Margaret to receive thee more graciously. But I knew that I could not be called upon to do so, inasmuch as I felt for a verity that, under the heavenly influences, the transmutation was on the brink of verification, and then I should have repaid thee those monies which thou hadst lent for the prosecution of my studies and experiments, with large usury and honourable thanks.'

'Was it for the forwarding of your experiments, Master Aylmer, that this money was lent?' asked Spencer.

'To a certainty,' replied Aylmer.

'And thou to gibe and flaunt *me* with an endeavour to palm upon Master Aylmer's sense for the purpose of deluding him of his Margaret!—thou who hadst thus been beforehand practising thine own vile accusations!'

'Thou hadst better pay me that thou owest, Master Aylmer—I love not to be bullied—or else teach this girl to turn these scornful airs into pleasant looks. As for this fellow, bid him begone! What has he to do with our counsels?'

'Would I could pay thee!' ejaculated the old man piteously.

'Good Master Ledger, how stands your account? Let us hear at what price in beggarly lucre you thought to buy the heaven of my Margaret's smiles and favour.'

'What is that to thee, prate-apace?'

'Master Smeaton seems to forget,' interposed Margaret, 'that, though but a simple maiden, I am not to be chaffered for like one of his bales of goods.'

'Tush! never fear but I will be kind to thee, and please thy little heart to the full. I will buy thee feathers and a farthingale, and strings of pearls and chains of gold. Thou shalt have a little page to wait on thee, and when we walk abroad the women shall all envy thee. Thou shalt rustle in thy silks, and brave it with the best of them. I will deny thee nothing, and thou dost not know how rich I am.'

'And thou thinkest thus with toys and gewgaws to buy woman's love!' exclaimed Spencer indignantly.

'I will not be thus fooled a minute longer. Make up your mind, Master Alymer. Your money or your promise! your money or your promise!' demanded Smeaton.

'Alack! what an evil day!' exclaimed the old man.

'Count up thy debt, Master Smeaton,' said Spencer: 'and if needs must, it may be that Master Aylmer may repay thee—with the little of a poor student's aid.'

'Alas, no, my good youth, it is beyond our means, both thine and mine!'

'Ha! ha! ha! Don't think to tell gold as well as words with me. Ha! ha! ha! Besides, I tell thee, that I am to be paid out of the crucible! out of the crucible!—either that or the girl! I want none other every-day vulgar gold, such as men dig for and delve for!—I have enough of that! Master Alymer promised on the faith of the philosopher's stone, and I hold him to his plighted word. The girl or the gold! the girl or the gold! I dare you to deny me, Master Alymer.'

'Alas, it is even so!' lamented the alchemist.

'Even so be it then,' said Spencer, after a moment's deliberation. 'Master Smeaton, we will renew the bargain. Sensible men waste not their time in bandying angry words. What need for railing? Master Alymer shall repay

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thee out of his crucible the first gold that he finds in it.'

'Ha! ha! ha!' scornfully laughed Smeaton. 'But when? when?—a hundred years hence?'

'Nay, but before thou shalt have slept and eaten some half-a-dozen times more.'

'In three days hence?'

'Master Alymer,' said Spencer to the old man, 'thou knowest that the heavenly bodies give out their most benign influence on the second night after this. Thou knowest that the wise men of old would have given the half of their own lives to have been in existence when that glorious aspect shall be taking place, and thou and I should think ourselves happy that the scales have fallen from our eyes, and enabled us to see what glorious things may be achieved at that propitious moment.'

'Ha! ha! ha!' laughed Smeaton; 'is it thus he cajoles him?'

'We must needs pity him,' continued Spencer. 'Thus it ever is with the besotted and the sensual; they cannot see the pure and holy expanses which study and devotion open out to the adept. They are blind—blind—and we must needs pity them. But, as we were saying, all things concur to render our faith strong in this our coming hour. So firm is my conviction of success, that I am content to hazard the happiness of my whole life upon it.'

'Good youth, where hast thou got thy wisdom? I will adventure all with thee, though I have spent my life in this pursuit, and it would well-nigh break my heart to find it but a dream, as the ignorant say; but their grosser natures cannot see the higher subtleties of the ethereal essences; but, as thou sayest, the heavenly natures, as it may be said, have been gathering themselves together in their strength to make the oncoming hour propitious, and thou and I have laboured to gather together those pure influences which shall come in such a glorious fruition. Ah! good youth, he speaks lightly of thy wit and youth, but lament not over thy young days, for thy name shall be handed down to posterity, coupled with mine own, and men shall say—'

'Ha! ha! ha!' chimed in Smeaton discordantly.

'—that together we have consummated the most glorious of discoveries, which but to imagine possible gave fame in bygone days to the few great men who dared to believe in its bare credibility.'

'I desire only to render you such fair service as beseems me, and care for nothing that oncoming ages may say of my small capacity. In fact, I desire not that my present doings should take any place in the page of history—though albeit in some humble page—some love-tale,' and he glanced at Margaret,—'I desire to be known no further.'

'I will just so far be surety for thee!' exclaimed Smeaton. 'Thou art, then, as I suspected, more knave than fool. However, I think thou art in a fair way of being caught in thine own trap. If I understand our bargain, I am either to be paid in pure gold out of your crucible, or—' and he glanced at Margaret.

'I subscribe to it,' said the old man, 'if so be that Master Spencer sees it good.'

'I subscribe to it also, but on conditions,' said Spencer. 'Is it fair that I should put the losing of my all upon one cast, without a hope of gaining by success?'

'Thou wilt gain gold,' said Smeaton, scornfully.

'But what is gold to me?' said Spencer; and then turning to the old man, 'If thou art putting my Margaret in the hazard, and I am to submit to the dread of losing her, ought I not to have some hope of winning also? Thou knowest that I have toiled and delved with thee, and am placing my all in this adventure with thee, and that I am seeking to be as a son to thee, and wilt thou not on thy part be as a father to me?'

'Even as thou and my Margaret will, for ye are both my dear ones.'

'A bargain is it, then?' said Smeaton.

'A bargain,' said the alchemist.

'And think ye all,' exclaimed Margaret, rising indignantly, and coming forward amongst them, the hot tears rolling over her crimson cheeks, and her eyes on fire with anger, 'think ye all that I am to be bought and sold, and chaffered for and cheapened, as though I were some handful of makeweight to a pedlar's bargain? As for you, Master Spencer, when you send out a venture to sea, let it be something to which you can make out some title of pretension. If it be your household goods and chattels, no one will gainsay your right; but if you choose to hazard your dog upon some idle venture, some trifling wager, see that he be first well beaten into submission; or your horse, that it be well bridled! For myself, I am not yours! I am not yours to throw into the scale of any idle bargain! Good sooth! we've come to a pretty pass when young cavaliers can say, "This is my property! it is of little value! I will cast it here, or I will throw it there!"'

Smeaton shrugged up his shoulders. 'A pretty rating!'

'For thee!' said Margaret, her attention caught by his voice, and turning round upon him sharply. 'I think the less of what thou canst do in thy mean nature, but from him I expected better things. Bargain as ye will, I am for none of you!'

'Is this our gentle Margaret?' exclaimed Smeaton. 'Why, I have known her from her cradle, and never thought that she could speak louder than her singing-bird. Good lack, is she such a shrew? I would rather face the buffets of six men-at-arms!'

'My pretty Margaret,' said Spencer, 'if I ever dared to think thee less than perfect, it was in the faint fear that thy milkiness of nature required flavour. Now the light that is in thine eye, and the fire that burns in thy cheek, and the spirit that breathes out of thy brave heart, prove that thou wert made for communion with higher souls, not alone for the silken companion of a summer day, but to stem the storm of bitter and biting adversity. The moon is beautiful in all her changes, and so art thou!'

'Every man to his taste!' muttered Smeaton. 'A gentle voice is an excellent thing in woman.

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I did not think she could have spoken so loud. She hath well-nigh scared me!'

What had been the future was now the present.

The second night had come, and in that lowly habitation where Margaret and her father dwelt, was gathered a little group for whom the events of the next hour were to decide the filling up of the large empty cup of hope, or the breaking it all to pieces, and casting the broken fragments on the ground.

It was midnight: the clock of St. Mary counted out the hours with most exact arithmetic, and the sound echoed through a dreary dark-walled chamber where Margaret and her two suitors and the alchemist were assembled. The place was all imbued with the mysterious tracings of those strange studies by which the adepts hoped to make a world of gold. The roof, crossed by the unsightly beams, was blackened by the smoke of many a midnight fire, rising from the furnace in the centre, which was now burning with its deep red light glowing out of the charcoal, and throwing fitful gleamings over the place, quite sufficient to show the murky walls and the strange apparatus scattered all around; on that intense blood-red fire was a large crucible, over which the alchemist was leaning, his eyes burning and devouring like the fire which threw its fitful gleams upon his anxious, time-worn countenance. It was easy to see, that however he might be buoyed up by artificial stimulants, his fears were largely preponderating over his hopes. He kept continually glancing his anxious eyes on Spencer, who was standing near him, every now and then whispering words of confidence, and joyfully anticipating the event. No shade of doubt appeared to shadow the brow of the young adept. His confidence seemed unshaken, for his courage was of the heart as well as of the mind; a feeling as much as a principle. Nay, there was even a superadded air of saucy exultation breathing over him as he glanced his quick-travelling eye over his companions, first upon Smeaton, who stood like a man in a dream wondering at everything, but most of all when he should awake, and then upon Margaret, who was leaning against the dusky wall a little apart, with her eyes resting on the crucible, in the depths of which lay her destiny, her long hair hanging in rich tresses, her lustrous black eyes straining themselves to search out-coming wonders, her lips slightly apart, her colour crimson, her garments wrapped around her, her foot on tiptoe. Altogether the scene looked like a strange piece of fortune-telling, in which the furnace was burning and the caldron bubbling, and they whose destiny was brewing were standing round.

'What thinkest thou?' said the alchemist to Spencer, in the low hushed voice in which men speak in churches which they reverence. 'What thinkest thou? Doth thy spirit droop? Doth thy heart smile? are thy hopes sick?'

Spencer smiled joyously and encouragingly upon the old man, and as they thus stood together with the red light flashing over them, no finer contrast both in person and character could be imagined than they thus furnished. The manly, the intrepid, the open, the exhilarating expression of his countenance, looked like sunshine by the side of the trembling, fearful, irresolute, quailing aspect of the alchemist. The smile with which he answered the doubting queries of his fellow-adept might have been sufficient; but in addition to its reply, he took the thin, bony, wrinkled hand of his companion within his own, and with a kindly pressure laid the long finger upon the pulse of his own wrist. The alchemist looked up into his face with a look of reassured hope.

'Thou art full of hope: thy pulse beats as calmly as an infant's—mine bounds and throbs,—ah! dost thou not feel it? I am in the fire?'

'Be at peace—be assured. Trust me, we cannot fail: all things go well.'

'But thou art young and sanguine,—I was once so; and often when I seemed to stand on the summit of success, at the very moment when I looked for the fruition, I was dashed down in despair! But I hoped on—over and over again—and now my head is grey, and my child is in jeopardy, for she loveth not that man! Seest thou not her disquietude? And may we not have been heedless of some of those benign influences which must all concur for our success? Ah! I tell thee that often when my hopes have been as high as thine, they have been dashed down to the earth!'

'Fear it not! I am as certain of success as my own existence.'

'Thou carriest it bravely to the last,' said Smeaton, 'but I would I were out of this! It savoureth of witchcraft, and I love not to touch my fingers with the pitch.'

'Thy worldly nature is altogether too gross for the divine sciences,' said the alchemist.

'Thou art something less than courteous,' said Smeaton, 'and I tell ye plainly, that were it not for the maiden's sake I would note these dark doings. But though I know it is no better than foolery and jugglery, I stand by to see fair play, for either I have my gold out of that crucible, or Margaret is mine by right of compact.'

'Thy gold thou shalt have,' responded Spencer, 'but not even in a thought shalt thou dare to consider my Margaret thine.'

'Is she,' said Margaret, sadly and reproachfully, 'to be the toy of an idle lottery—won or lost by chance!'

'Dost thou call our labours in that holy science, in which thy father has passed his life, but a lottery and a chance,' exclaimed the alchemist. 'Alas! alas! and this from mine own child! what then may I expect from this world? A prophet hath indeed but little honour in his own country! Good youth, were it not for thee, my soul would well-nigh lose its courage!

'But Margaret meant it not as a reproach either to thee or to our noble science. It was rather to me.' And as he spoke, Spencer approached her, and dropping his voice into those silver sweet tones which are only meant for loving listenings,—'Words of reproach, my Margaret, and the first utterance of your heart to mine since we were three days younger. How many hours of happiness have we thus lost!'

'Am I to beg favour of thee? am I to humble

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myself before thee, and ask the alms even of a word? Hast thou spoken, and have I not answered! Thinkest thou, because I am poor and lowly, and thou hast chosen to doff thy finery to make thyself mine equal, that I were to sue for thy favour? I tell thee nay! and were it not that thou hast so woven thyself around my poor father's heart, that to tear thee away would rend it, I would even now proclaim to him that thou art not what thou seemest!'

'What then am I?' asked Spencer calmly.

'I know not! I remember thee well in thy bravery, when thou wentest ruffling in the shop of Master Jeweller; I remember thee as thou wert then—now thou art content to come among us as a humble student.'

'My simple Margaret,' replied Spencer, 'and dost thou not yet know that all is not gold that glitters? Many a homely youth, who can but scantily supply his daily need, will yet rustle it gaily in his holiday garb. Shall I come to thee in this saint-day fashion, and show thee that I have no double dealing?'

'Thou talkest of double dealing, and yet canst thou honestly say that thou believest there will prove gold among the rubbish of yonder crucible? Thy brain must needs be wandering, or thy senses small, or else thou canst prize me indeed but little, to dare to put me on so wild a hazard.'

'My Margaret, thou art as great a little unbeliever as yonder loon.'

'Tell me not of him.'

'I will not, Margaret. I will rather tell thee that, notwithstanding all thy churlishness of words, even within these three days of thy displeasure I have been happy,—ah! how happy—in being near thee. Is not the mere presence of those we love, happiness? There is a very atmosphere of happiness around them, and but to be within it, satisfies the soul. Prizing thee thus, canst thou think that I would hazard thy dear heart upon any reckless venture? Rest happy, for whatever thou mayest believe or disbelieve, gold shall come from that crucible as surely as the sun gives us light. And will not thy father be happy, dearest, in the accomplishment of all his long-cherished wishes, and shall we not both be happy, at least if thou art not determined upon preferring thy elder suitor,' said Spencer, smilingly. 'Thou shalt choose between us, and I will give him all fair play.'

'Name him not!' exclaimed Margaret.

'The time approaches,' said the alchemist, 'the eventful moment. Keep ye silence all, and let no unhallowed thought find entrance into your soul, lest you mar the sacred influence. Master Spencer, lose not thy time with my unbelieving child, but come thou hither and keep watch with me, that we lose not the precious moment of transmutation.'

'A few moments more or less,' said Spencer, 'need not be too deeply thought for.'

'There for the first time I differ with thee—for Trismegistus sayeth—but let there be silence on our lips, and let our souls ponder. I would that I could still the beating of my heart.'

There was silence among them. The smoke from the furnace and the deep red glow of its light came over the face of the alchemist, as with intense emotion he hung over the burning fusion. Scarcely less intense seemed the anxiety of his daughter, whose large lustrous eyes rested first upon the crucible, then on her father, then upon Spencer. Smeaton looked on half stupified, yet tenaciously holding fast his obstinacy and dogged determination. The young student alone possessed his buoyant equanimity.

'And now,' said Spencer, 'the time of expectancy is gone. All is either as we hoped or as we feared. The moment of precious influence is over. Now, my best friend, let thine own anxious eyes be first gladdened with the sight of the fruit of all thy labours. Look thou first upon the issue of thy toils, and bethink thee o that great renown which shall belong to the first successful alchemist.'

'Mine eyes are dim, my limbs totter, my senses fail me! Look thou!'

The student took the iron forceps in his hand, and, after removing piece by piece of the glowing charcoal, lifted out the crucible, and emptied it of the embers, when, lo! from its very depths there fell a real, a true, a solid, pure, heavy, substantial mass of that glittering gold which our world is running so madly after.

The old man clasped his hands, and fell sobbing upon Spencer's shoulder. Margaret half shrieked in joyful astonishment. Smeaton looked confusion worse confounded. Spencer's face wore only his sly smile.

'My blessed youth!' exclaimed the alchemist, 'I should never have succeeded but for thee.'

'*I don't think you would*,' thought Master Spencer.

Master Smeaton was of course paid out of the crucible, and in a very little time after, the alchemist, and his daughter, and his son-in-law, for such Spencer soon became, removed to a noble mansion which overhung the Thames. Wonderful were the results of alchemy, for, lo! the dwelling of the gold-maker might well have sufficed for the habitation of a prince. Margaret rustled in silks and jewels like a little queen. Spencer lavished gold around him, and was surrounded by retainers, whilst the alchemist looked fondly on them both, and proudly on the rich orderings around him, and every now and then ejaculated, 'It was a blessed day when I betook me to the study of the angelical science, and it was a blessed day when I met with Master Spencer. He was ever a good youth to me, and aided me in my studies when other men only studied and smiled upon them, and I have been able to reward him as it behoved me. Let me see—I have given him two goodly estates, and mansions altogether too fair to look upon, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and jewels, and precious stones, to say nothing of Margaret's somewhat vain attire; and I have given him—but no matter, he is a good youth, and deserves it all.'

There were to be seen people in the world who knew so little what was going on in it—ignorant people, who were bigoted to their own ways—as to say that Master Spencer had all these things from his youth up, and his father before him. These people might think that

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they knew well, the alchemist knew better, but Master Spencer knew best.

SPENCER MIDDLETON; OR, THE SQUIRE OF RIVER HILL.

BY GEORGE STANLEY, ESQ.

CHAPTER VII.

The Coroner's inquest—Mr. Spatula.

ALL free, liberal, and enlightened levellers, not only of these days, but ever since levelling was invented—whether frequenters of mechanics' institutes or of the tap-room; readers of the delicate Globe or growling Chronicle, or devourers of the Tap-tub or the despatch—have been unanimous in selecting one standard—a sliding scale—to which, in their great kindness to the infirmities of human nature, they would reduce the entire race of men. That standard is one for which each of them retains the very highest degree of respect—a respect not temporary, but which begins with youth, and generally goes on to the grave. It is, I myself. They have no desire that any one should rise above that level, as perhaps it might render such persons too proud, or interfere with their own prospects. If, however, the world are to sink a little lower, why, the sooner the journey is over the better; and therefore, in a spirit of the purest philanthropy, they would extend to their neighbours a helping foot—their *non à priori* argument.

Such a leveller was Mr. Dionysius Spatula, formerly apothecary's boy in Longacre, where he swept the shop and stole Spanish liquorice; then deputy-under-sub-apothecary's assistant in the Borough, where he was particularly adroit in poisoning babies with oxalic acid; then, after passing through the successive changes of deputy-under-sub, under-deputy, and deputy, he rose to the full place of apothecary-in-chief in the Strand, now or late editor or proprietor of the 'Blister,' a diurnal medico-politico journal, and, at the moment of our tale, coroner for the county. Such a leveller was the coroner, that among all the dozens, ay hundreds, of articles he had written, and speeches he had made, he had never been known to propose, even theoretically, to exalt the lower classes to an equality with his own, though he had laboured diligently to reduce all such as were above him to his own standard.

This rule he would have carried out even to stature, and, Procrustes-like, have reduced all men to his measure—some five feet nothing. Indeed, Mr. Spatula was the picture of littleness. His head was small in proportion to any other person's whose height was within an eighth of an inch of the doctor's; his shoulders were small in proportion to his head; his body was small in proportion to its shoulders; his legs were small in proportion to the body they supported; and his feet clearly proved that Mr. Dionysius Spatula was 'small by degrees and beautifully less.'

Before we proceed further, let it be said, once for all, Mr. Spatula was very charitable—and charity covereth a multitude of sins.

The 'Blister' was the making of Mr. Coroner Spatula. But for that, he might still have dispensed yards of diaculum and pounds of pills from behind his mahogany—as it was, he raised the 'Blister,' and the 'Blister' raised him. When the publication was first started, he contented himself with exposing the enormities committed by the porters and nurses at the hospitals; recorded, for the benefit of his readers, how Mrs. Deborah Curse, of St. Thomas's, had actually, with aristocratic brutality, told poor Mrs. Cornelius O'Brien, of Dirt and Gutter Alley, St. Giles's, that she, Mrs. Deborah Curse, wished that she, Mrs. Cornelius O'Brien, might get—thereby meaning that she should not have—a certain glass of gin and bitters which the aforesaid Mrs. O'Brien had been desirous of taking after a certain black dose, in the 'Blister' particularly described, in order to free herself from the unpleasant taste of her morning's draught. And then he would dilate on the peculations of porters and messengers, and reduce to a regular table, with proper averages, decimals, and per centums, the amount of diaculum, blue pill, and senna, actually stolen by one John Thompson, late footman to an episcopal or lordly governor, who, being a gentleman and a Tory, was peculiarly distasteful to the editor of the 'Blister.'

In consequence of his success in the sanatorial and nurse line—which might be called by some invetcrate punster, the porter and stout business—he determined on a more lofty flight; so he forthwith singled out an unfortunate dresser, who happened to depute his office to another pupil, who deputed it to a third, who, being extremely oblivious, diligently abstained from the performance of his arduous duties, lest, through forgetfulness, he should err, and also forgot to appoint his sub-deputy under-sub. Then he fell foul of a clinical clerk or two, one or more sub-surgeons, and, lastly, the chaplain of a western establishment, because he wore clean linen, drank port, and was an Oxonian. To conclude, he made a bold attack on the chief sawyers—the operatic surgeons—got into the King's Bench for a libel, and came out thence a medical martyr.

Martyrdom, now-a-days, is fashionable, and, like the influenza, catching. It is the sentimental measles of the age—the putrid fever of society in this nineteenth century. A little bandy-legged tailor, of Duck-lane, has a conscientious scruple about paying a church-rate; holds out manfully for two shillings and three farthings: goes to a meeting of an anti-pay-anything-to-anybody club, and to bed afterwards rather drunk; rises the next morning rather too seedy to work, and so determines on letting the 'vile minion of a bloated and despotic prelacy seize the three-legged table, on which his frugal meal had often gladdened the craving appetites of his numerous and intelligent offspring:' and in return for all these sufferings, receives a genteel annuity from the incorporated friends of Protestantism, and is handed down by the weeklies as a church-rate martyr.

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Jeremiah Jenkins, strongly addicted to new rum, is suddenly converted to the blessings of silken banners and tea and bun feasts; cuts off his daily pint of liquor, and takes to bad tea and opium pills instead; falls into a lethargic state; becomes incapacitated for work; and retires to a contract workhouse coffin—a tetotal martyr.

A tall spare artizan, who sticks on pins' heads by the thousand, drinks gin by the pint, and revels in a Socialist weekly, firmly persuaded of the truth of the doctrine that all men are equal—meaning thereby that no one should presume to be better off than himself—having failed to persuade the great landed proprietor of the neighbourhood of the truth of this first principle in modern political science, endeavours one dark night to throw a light upon the intricacies of the subject, through the medium of the squire's haystacks, or the millocrat's factory, falls under the ruthless hands of the yeomanry—'the bigoted adherents of a bigoted aristocracy'—see blood and murder gazette—and goes out to the Australian paradise—a Chartist martyr.

Were we to permit our disquisition to run its tether, old Fox would shrink into insignificance as to length, and hardly bear mentioning in the same month as to veracity.

But to return to Mr. Spatula. Among the many undoubted verities which that enlightened practitioner loved to inculcate, and for the practical development of which he devoted his pen, his paper, and his patience, were two of paramount importance to the world and to himself—the necessity of ousting the lawyers from the coroner's seat of judgment in favour of the apothecaries, and also of sending Mr. Spatula himself to the Commons' house of parliament, to enable him to reform everything, and to reduce into the tangible form of certain bills the various enlightened theories with which his mind was crowded. At the time during which we shall require the learned gentleman's presence at the Hog and Codfish, he was member of parliament for the borough of Rubbish, and coroner for the county.

'Good morning to you, gentlemen, good morning,' said the coroner, as he ran rather than walked into the great room of the Hog and Codfish, some half hour after his appointed time. 'Sorry to keep you waiting, gentlemen, but business is business.'

'Very true, sir,' replied Mr. Simpkins, the coroner's clerk—'very true, sir, indeed; business is business.'

'Yes,' said Mr. Spatula. 'Little do the world know what are the fatigues of a parliamentary career; except to the silent vote, the aristocratic stripling, who votes according to his father's orders, it is a life of care, of toil—no Stagyrite's bed of roses.'

'Sybarite,' muttered Mr. Mauley, the solicitor, who attended on behalf of Mr. Middleton to watch the proceedings.

'A second row behind the treasury bench for a representative of the popular voice,' continued the orator, and here he cast his eyes over a bundle of papers, tied with lawyer-like red tape, which he carried in his hand. 'All these to be read, digested, convoluted, understood before four o'clock. "Bill for the encouragement of sudden deaths;"—fine bill—fine bill that, Simpkins—my measure—my measure. "Bill for repealing the law of libel as to daily publications;"—humph—doubts about that measure—the "Bible and Crown" very abusive of me last Monday—ah, but then the "Blister"—must have a clause excepting the political journals. "Bill for washing chimney-sweepers on a Saturday night;"—pure, exalted, liberal philanthropy—will only require one chief commissioner, three deputies, and about fifteen hundred officers—some thirty or forty thousand a year—but what is that to seeing the dear little creatures as white as the snow-wreath which the winter storm hurries round the topmost branches of the giant oak, the lord of the deep-shadowing woods—humph—good simile—mark that, it will do to-night. "Bill to increase the remuneration of county coroners;" good bill, good bill—the labourer is worthy of his hire—good argument in case of coroners—very fallacious when cited by Mr. Churchman, in support of parliamentary religion—wonder what the honourable member for Downright meant by saying the devil could quote scripture to his own advantage.'

How long Mr. Spatula might have rambled on, it is impossible to say; the clerk's preparations, however, being now complete, the coroner was obliged to bring to an end his half told tale, in order to proceed with the inquest to view the body of the murdered servant.

On the return of the thirteen wise men, the inquiry commenced, and certain matters of fact were duly proved. After some of the initiatory circumstances of the event had been explained, Dr. M'Gillyflower, who had been summoned to view the body, was on the point of tendering the result of his *post mortem* examination, when Mr. Spatula, chancing to cast his eyes towards the right-hand corner of the room, espied sundry reporters of the daily papers diligently jotting down the proceedings of the inquest.

'Mr. Fielden,' said the coroner, with a flushed face, addressing himself to the reporter of the leading morning journal, opposed both to the person and the principles of Mr. Spatula, and which had lately indulged in various pleasant remarks on the versatile coroner—'Mr. Fielden, I must request you to leave the court.'

'Leave the court, Mr. Coroner!—may I ask for what reason?' inquired the astonished reporter.

'Because I please, sir,' replied Spatula, with all the dignity of an insulted bantam. 'My court is my own, sir, and I will not allow reporters in it.'

'It is a public court,' replied Mr. Fielden.

'It is not, sir; my court is my own; and I have a right to do what I like with my own.'

'Very well. Mr. Coroner; if you will exclude all reporters, I will readily depart,' replied Mr. Fielden.

'I shall do as I please, sir,' was Spatula's answer. 'Do you think,' he continued, 'that I will permit the hired reporters of the press to garble my speeches, misrepresent my opinions, turn into ridicule my theories, and endeavour, by every species of malevolent, slanderous, and

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defamatory abuse, wickedly and maliciously to injure my good fame and credit, and to bring me into public scandal, infamy, and disgrace, and to cause me to be suspected and believed guilty of great villany.' (Poor man, he had so often seen the common form of a declaration in a libel, that the words ran in his head.) 'Never will I allow the hired minions of a despotic aristocracy to call in question the spotless fame that always has belonged to the coroner of this county. No, Mr. Speaker—no, sir; never will I permit the rights of the press to be trampled upon—to call in question my abilities—to—to —Leave the room, Mr. Fielden.'

'Good morning, Mr. Coroner. You may depend that your eloquent address shall be reported verbatim. Good morning, Mr. Dionysius Spatula.'

'Was there ever such insolence?' muttered Mr. Spatula. 'Such is the effect of the mildewing principles of feudal prejudice, combined with the love of that filthy lucre for which the scribbling minion, greatly envying the happy condition of the said plaintiff—bah, there's that declaration in libel again—call the next witness, Mr. Simpkins.'

Mr. Spatula having at length perceived that he had travelled beyond his record, and astonished his auditors at the expense of time and patience, recovered his seat, and proceeded to vent the remainder of his anger on his old friend, Dr. M'Gilliflower, the medical witness.

Besides certain deep-seated and most particularly private reasons, which it is impossible now to discover, there were three most prominent and evident why Mr. Coroner Spatula should endeavour to annoy, and if possible render ridiculous, Mr. medical witness M'Gilliflower. In the first place, when Mr. Spatula went up for his examination at the Hall, he got plucked, and the plucker was Dr. M'Gilliflower; secondly, when Mr. Spatula bent the whole terrors of the daily Blister on John Thompson, some time footman to the Lord Bishop of Dash, and afterwards porter at St. Bartholomew's, Dr. M'Gilliflower, then surgeon of the hospital, threw his protecting ægis over the porter, and not only refused to entertain the charge, but civilly hinted at a criminal prosecution of the editor of the Blister; and thirdly, lastly, though not least, it was not many years ago that, for reasons registered in his Majesty's Court of Common Pleas, in a certain cause depending therein between the aforesaid doctor and the aforesaid coroner, the said coroner had to pay to the said doctor the sum of two hundred pounds, lawful money of Great Britain, as damages for a slanderous and scurrilous libel on the said doctor, and also the sum of seventy-five pounds fifteen shillings and sixpence for costs incurred by the plaintiff in the prosecution of the said libel.

'Stop,' said Mr. Spatula to the officer, as he was proceeding to swear the witness. 'I must request you, Dr. M'Gilliflower, to answer me a question or two first.'

The doctor stared, and bowed assent.

'Do you believe in a God, sir?' asked the coroner, with a sneer.

'I trust I do,' replied the doctor, reverently.

'Be kind enough not to equivocate, sir,' replied Spatula—'plain yes or no.'

'Equivocate, sir?'

'Answer my question, sir—plain yes or no.'

'Yes,' answered the doctor, with a look of ineffable contempt at the spiteful coroner.

'Do you know the nature of an oath?' asked Spatula.

'Yes.'

'O, well, I suppose you may be sworn,' replied the coroner, with a very patronizing air. 'Simpkins, swear Dr. M'Gilliflower.'

So the doctor was sworn, and proceeded to give his evidence.

He had first examined the body, and discovered a considerable burn on the left breast, corresponding to another in the servant's waistcoat; in the middle of the burn was a small perforation, made by the bullet, which might be traced entirely through the body to a corresponding aperture beneath the right bladebone; that the bullet was discovered among the clothes of the bed over which the servant's body had fallen; and that death had been caused by the passage of the ball through certain vital parts, to which he gave certain very hard and long names, in its course through the body.

'How do you know, Dr. M'Gilliflower,' asked the coroner, 'that the perforations were caused by the passage of a bullet?'

'From the appearance of the edges of the wounds, and from the facts of the burn, the firing of the pistol, and the finding of the bullet.'

'O, then, because you are told that a pistol has been fired by somebody, and you find a man with a burn on his body, and a bullet near him, you determine he died by this bullet?'

'I have already stated my reasons,' replied the witness, mildly and firmly.

'O then you refuse to answer?'

'No, sir, I do not.'

'Pray, Dr. M'Gilliflower, have you ever seen bullet wounds before?'

'Yes, many.'

'Have you seen a hundred?'

'I should think not.'

'Have you seen fifty?' asked the coroner.

'I should think not.'

'Have you seen twenty?' reiterated the coroner.

'Very likely,' replied Dr. M'Gilliflower, getting rather warm.

'Plain yes or no, sir.'

'I cannot exactly say,' replied the doctor.

'Plain yes or no, sir,' reiterated the coroner, delighted at his success.

'Then no, sir,' replied M'Gilliflower.

'Thank you, Dr. M'Gilliflower—I believe we shall not want your evidence any more—good morning,' said the coroner. 'Call the next witness.'

Martha was now called and sworn. Apparently overcome with grief at the loss of her master, she made dexterous use of her handkerchief, by which means, and the assistance of a very downcast and modest deportment, she created a considerable sensation among the members of the inquest.

Overcome with watching and want of rest—so she said—she had fallen into a half kind of sleep opposite the fire, when she was disturbed by the breaking in of the door of the chamber. Turning round, she saw two men in dark fus-

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tian dresses and black masks, one of whom immediately seized and pinioned her to her chair with her face to the fire, placed a gag in her mouth, and ordered her to keep still under pain of death. She then heard the bureau forced, and a rattling of money, quickly followed by the noise of footsteps on the stairs. Then all seemed confusion;—she heard blows and a heavy fall, a confused noise of struggling, the report of a pistol, hurried footsteps down stairs, and then all quiet until she was released by one of the previous witnesses, and discovered Sampson lying lifeless across the dead body of her master.

'Dead body of your master!' repeated the coroner, pricking up his ears at the nurse's last words—'dead body of your master! How did he die?—what of?'

'I found him dead when we removed poor Sampson.'

'How's this, how's this?' exclaimed Mr. Spatula—'died suddenly—found dead, and no inquest! Simpkins,' (to his officer,) 'have you summoned another inquest?'

'No, if you please, sir, I had no notice.'

'No notice! Another instance of smothering inquiry,' said the coroner.

'Mr. Middleton, sir,' suggested Mr. Mouldy, the attorney, 'had been an invalid, indeed in a dying state, some days, and therefore it was not thought necessary to summon an inquest.'

'Necessary or not necessary, I am to judge of that, sir; and the rights of the public and of coroners shall not be violated during my reign. Simpkins, summon another inquest, and remember I will sit on every person who dies suddenly.'

'Yes,' muttered Mouldy, 'he'd sit on his grandmother's tom cat, if he died in convulsions, for a guinea a day, and eighteenpence a mile for posting.'

'Silence in the court,' cried Spatula, looking very warm and angry as he caught the import of the solicitor's observation.

'Before the witness leaves the box, I wish to ask her one or two questions, Mr. Coroner,' said Mouldy.

'Questions, questions—what's the good of more questions?' snapped the coroner.

'*I* think it necessary.'

'O, very well; of course, if *you* wish it,' replied Spatula, throwing himself back on his chair, and proceeding to read one of his many pet bills.

'You say that two men broke into your master's room?'

'Yes, sir.'

'Did you ever see either of those men before?'

'They had black masks on,' replied the nurse.

'Do you mean to say that no part of their faces was visible?'

'Of course she does,' cut in the coroner.

The solicitor repeated his question, without seeming to notice the interruption.

'Yes,' replied Martha, taking the cue from Mr. Spatula.

'Were the masks at all like this one?' said Mouldy, exhibiting a narrow handkerchief-mask, merely covering the mouth, and which had been torn from the squire during the struggle with the servant, and found in the room after the flight of the robbers.

Martha looked a little discomposed, and at last stammered out a sort of half assent, whilst Spatula took a far-off view of the relic through his gold eyeglass.

'Do you know a person called Mark Redmond?' asked Mouldy, looking very hard at the witness.

'I believe I do,' murmured Martha, trying to feel, or at least to look, as if she felt very faint.

'When did you see him last?'

'I don't know,' sobbed the nurse.

Mouldy being affected with a fit of unbelief, repeated the question.

'She tells you she does not know,' said the coroner very sharply, not taking the trouble to raise his eyes from one of his pet bills, through the many clauses of which he was busily moving them.

'How long since?' asked Mouldy, not heeding the coroner's hint.

'Some time,' said Martha, slightly encouraged by the interference of the learned doctor.

'Some time since,' said Mouldy, dropping out the words, and watching Martha as a cat would a lamed mouse. 'Some—time—since: did you or did you not see Mark Redmond on the morning of the day on which your master died?'

'I dont remember—at least—perhaps I might have,' faintly ejaculated Martha, now beginning to feel really unwell, and very far from pleased with her position.

'Had you any conversation with him?'

'Hearsay evidence, hearsay evidence is not admissible,' said the coroner, looking overpleased, in having as he thought, caught the lawyer at fault. 'You must not inquire what he said.'

'I am perfectly well aware of that, Mr. Coroner. Now, Mrs. Martha Smith, will you tell me whether you had any conversation with the man Mark at your last meeting with him,' said Mouldy, with a cool sneer at the disappointed Spatula.

'I believe I might,' replied Martha.

'Did you inform him of the fact of your master having made his will on the previous evening?'

'I believe I might,' replied Mrs. Smith, with a most piteous look at the coroner, unfortunately entirely thrown away, as the learned medico M. P. was just at that moment busily engaged in filling up the blanks in his new bill, 'to increase the remuneration of county coroners,' by simply adding 5 per cent. to the old fees.

'Now, Mrs. Smith, did the man Mark give you a small vial containing medicine for your master?'

Mrs. Martha Smith, clearly perceiving that matters were taking a very unpleasant turn, and that, by some means or other, the conversation with Redmond had not been so secret as she had supposed, determined, as a 'dernier ressort,' to have a real faint. Accordingly, she no sooner heard the last question in a due course of repetition by the solicitor, than she caused her eyes to roll gradually round the room, and

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then to fix with awful intensity on Mr. Spatula; concluding the exhibition by sliding down on her back, and drumming the Rogue's March on the floor with her heels.

Mr. Spatula's old medical habits burst forth on the moment; he threw down his dear bills, routed out his lancets, and was by the side of the senseless witness in half a minute, perfectly prepared to bleed, bleed, bleed, to the last drop. Mr. Mouldy well aware that nothing more could be on this occasion elicited from the witness, and sufficiently satisfied in his suspicions to prompt him to continue his researches after the lost will, permitted Martha to be carried out of the court; and Spatula, having resigned his new patient into the hands of the village apothecary, returned to his judicial seat to sum up the evidence and charge the inquest.

Not being readers of the Early Purl, the only paper whose reporter was allowed to be present during the inquest, it is impossible to present to our friends a full, true, and particular account of the learned doctor's speech. Our memory, however, will supply us with the heads of that remarkable oration—an oration as remarkable for its length as for the variety of the topics introduced into it—and what it must have been, we shall be able to guess, when we remember its effect on the twelve jurymen as demonstrated in the verdict.

The learned coroner commenced his address, by informing the jury that they were to determine why John Sampson died—from that point he took a short excursion into the nature of life and death, advocated a little materialism and freethinking, gave a few sneers at religion and its ministers, and came back rather out of breath to the evidence of the early witnesses. From this he once more digressed into his favourite subject, the election of medical coroners, and spoke of the goddess of anatomy and medicine sitting enthroned on the pedestal whence the idol of legal chicanery had been ignominiously hurled. He then proceeded to consider Dr. M'Gilliflower's evidence, commenting upon the absolute necessity of the legislative wisdom—so M. P.'s always talk of themselves—enacting that all doctors and surgeons should proceed regularly from shop-boys to shop-men, from shop-men to masters, and from masters to physicians or surgeons. 'A pistol,' he said, was heard, one of the combatants was found dead, his body was pierced through, a bullet was found in the room, but there was no evidence to prove who fired the pistol, or whether it was a pistol at all, or whether the pistol was loaded, or whether, if loaded, with the ball which had been found, or whether the ball already found, or the supposed pistol, in any way had contributed to the death of the servant. At this part of his charge, Mr. Spatula looked with surprising dignity at Mr. Mouldy, thinking that he was laying down a legal judgment on the evidence, and was greatly surprised at the grave smile which played over the solicitor's countenance. He then eulogized the nurse Martha, spoke of her evident sufferings in her master's cause, of the cruelty of attempting to confound witnesses by legal subtleties, and then went off into a general harangue on the acute feelings of the lower classes, the devotion of poor men to their rich tyrants, and the cold, unfeeling, uncharitable, unchristian conduct of the aristocracy—the entire excursus being the greater part of the learned gentleman's last harangue at the Cat and Whistle, on the enormities of New Bastiles, water-gruel, dry rooms, and clean beds. Mr Spatula, in conclusion, after alluding to Draco's sanguinary code—Norfolk Islands, the hulks, and solitary confinement, and informing his jury and the audience in general of his view of punishments, and how that he would punish murderers by transportation for life, informed the twelve wise men, that after the luminous manner in which the evidence had been summed up by him, and the elaborate way in which he had laid down the common sense of the affair, they would not be many minutes in returning their verdict.

After some short consultations among themselves, the jury requested, much to the coroner's surprise, to be allowed to retire, and it was not until nearly three-quarters of an hour had elapsed that they returned and gave in, through their foreman, the following sensible verdict.

'We find that John Sampson came to his death by a pistol, but there is no evidence to prove that the pistol was loaded—we also find the prisoner guilty of transportation for life.'

After Mr. Spatula had explained to the enlightened twelve that their verdict was rather wrong, and that there was not any prisoner in the case, and also furnished them with a proper form, they once more deliberated and found, that 'John Sampson came to his death from a pistol, but that there was no evidence to prove by whom the same was fired.' And this verdict having been duly registered, the assembly departed for their several works, and restored the Hog and Codfish to its usual state of peaceful tranquillity.

CHAPTER VIII.

Our hero determines to reform and retrench, and thereby obtains some slight insight into the sayings and doings of certain inhabitants of the city of Oxford.

Whilst Spencer, in accordance with the suggestions conveyed to him by his father, in the letter which we have lately read, was making up his mind to submit with the best possible grace to the freaks which fortune seemed likely to play him, and, by resolutely applying his shoulder to the wheel, to extricate himself from his difficulties, the Oxford world was studiously employed in speculating, asserting, contradicting, and deciding on the vastness of the wealth, the number of the acres, the rental of the lands, the stateliness of the mansions, the hundreds of pictures and the cupboards of plate, to which *their fortunate* Oxonian was immediately to succeed.

'By the living Jingo,' lisped the hopeful scion of the house of Mowbray, gentleman commoner

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of our hero's college; 'by the living Jingo,' he elegantly repeated, as he read the death of old Aubrey Middleton in the columns of the Grunticle, 'the old 'un has hopped the twig, and the old tory parson and the infant Hercules—Spencer's nickname—will come the don over us.'

The news was rapidly and extensively circulated; cards came through the letter-box at a most rapid pace; the reverend the president's blue and yellow servant made anxious inquiries after Mr. Middleton's health; the common-room man brought the common-room's compliments and inquiries on the same subject; the senior tutor sent his scout to say he hoped Mr. Middleton would not over excite himself by attending his lectures; whilst the Dean remitted his last week's imposition, and voluntarily gave him at *carte blanche* for the next seven days. To his friends Davis and Hamilton the whole affair was a matter of perfect astonishment, especially when they contrasted our hero's previous account of his prospects with the reserved manner in which he received the congratulations of his friends and his acquaintances, and seemed studiously to throw cold water on all the many fine compliments which his rumoured good fortune had brought upon him. Bad news always travels fast, and more especially so when treading on the heels of more pleasing intelligence. Doubts began to be expressed; newspapers began to set out dark paragraphs; and when the full account of the inquest appeared in the Early Purl, accompanied with a little special relation from their own correspondent of the supposed loss of the will, hin s grew into assertions. At last, it was not to be denied that a nearer heir than our hero was in existence—had put in his claim—nay more, some said he had taken possession of Riverhill—had been claimed by the Cap of Liberty as one of *the people*—and unless the will turned up in answer to the proffered reward, was likely to remain in possession. Round went the weathercock. The cards ceased; the president's blue and yellow did not make his morning call; the tutor requested Mr. Middleton's attendance at lecture, and tried to find fault with his construing, and took especial care to disagree with and cavil at everything he said or did; the dean became religiously particular about morning chapels; and the youthful scion of the Mowbray tree passed his dear friend Spencer without recognizing him, through his shortsightedness; whilst the duns, quick-sighted, or quick-scented as the vulture, came pouncing down on all sides, each eager to have first pick at the fallen prey.

'Indeed it is too true, Hamilton,' said our hero, as he sat over his college fire, and endeavoured to charm away his melancholy by the conversation of Hamilton and Davis, assisted by a bottle of old port. 'Indeed it is too true, we are ruined; the will which my poor uncle had executed in our favour has been stolen, and although a reward has been offered, we have not got on its scent yet; the heir, a son of my uncle the priest, has claimed, and, as we have no right to resist, must turn us out forthwith; indeed, my mother and Emily have already gone to the parsonage at Wicherly, and my father waits but to deliver up the keys before he joins them.'

'The fall is great,' said Gerard, 'but yet there is the vicarage to retire on.'

'A mere trifle, about three hundred a year, and besides this—nothing.'

'Nothing!' exclaimed the friends.

'Literally nothing. My mother, you perhaps know, was the daughter of a poor country clergyman; the small portion which my father inherited must all be sold to pay off the last quarter's expenses at the hall, and to help me out of my debts.'

'Expenses at the hall?'

'Yes—as my uncle died before his usual day for payment of his handsome allowance, everything falls on my father.'

'Most inequitable, but I suppose legal,' replied Hamilton.

'Of course it is,' grumbled Tom Davis, knocking the white ash from his third cigar,—'of course it is strictly legal,—I never knew a hard case that was not strictly legal.'

'But your debts, Spencer—surely they cannot be very large,' said Gerard Hamilton.

'Perhaps not as the heir of River Hill, but very heavy as only the poor but extravagant son of a poor vicar,' replied Spencer.

'What's their amount?' inquired Hamilton.

'Much more than I expected—some two hundred and over.'

'Humph,' said Hamilton, 'humph—pretty well for about two months; but come, what do you propose doing?'

'Selling off everything here, paying all I owe, or at least as far as I can, and leaving Oxford for ever.'

'That will not do,' replied Hamilton; 'you must not think of leaving; where else, and in what other way, can you expect to get on?'

'If very lucky, I may obtain a clerkship in a counting-house.'

'Ay, and keep a cat, send Tommy out to the Sandwich Islands, and set up as a modern Whittington,' said the incorrigible Tom.

'No, no,' said Hamilton, 'business is not suited for you—you must stay here.'

'I would willingly, if I possibly could—but the expense would be ruinous—ridiculous.'

'You must do this—give up being a gentleman commoner; get out of your present expensive rooms, ask for and obtain the bible clerkship which Hitchins resigns next term, ascend to his garrets, pay off your debts from the produce of your furniture, and make up your mind to work hard for a class, and live on the proceeds of your bible clerkship.'

'Willingly, willingly, Hamilton, if it can be done,' exclaimed Spencer.

'It shall be done—my cousin the vice-president has already hinted to me that the clerkship is at your service if you will apply for it—you say your debts are about two hundred pounds—well, your rooms—Tom Mowbray wants them—will produce half that; can you reasonably expect to be able to provide the rest?'

Spencer expressed his doubts.

'Very well, then, something else must be done—tell your duns that I guarantee your debts.'

'And I'll go your halves,' said Davis, 'Come, come, Spencer boy,' he continued 'don't look so miserable; it will not ruin either of us if you don't pay at all; and if you do, why, confound it, where are we the worse for it after all?—why, I feel more comfortable now.'

'Thank you, thank you, my dear friends,' gasped our hero.

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'Why, hang it, Spencer,' said Davis, 'who has a right to be friends if we have not? Hamilton used to lick you at Boxington for not fetching the porter quick enough, and I used to lick him in return—so you see there's some use in fagging after all.'

'Can I live on the clerkship?' inquired Spencer, relieved by Davis's good-humoured kindness.

'Yes, I think you can,' replied Gerard. 'Eighty pounds in cash, some odd pounds for drawing up testimonials, a weekly allowance in your battles, and no room rent, will go very far towards keeping you—at least if you are careful.'

'O, easily, easily,' exclaimed Spencer.

'Steady, Spencer, there's tutorage.'

'Pooh, Girard,' said Davis, 'free gratis to scholars and bible clerks.'

'Pooh, Tom—not college tutorage, that is never worth five per cent. of the money, a private coach, Davis.'

'O surely I can do without a private tutor,' said our hero.

'Hardly for honours; you might, perhaps, in classics—you would not in mathematics, and on the whole you'll do better with one.'

'It must not be thought of,' said Spencer.

'Yes, it must—if you will be content with a double second, who will undertake to work you up to his maximum, and thereby enable you to get on further.'

'And fare worse,' muttered Davis.

'As the matter may be, Tom—why, as I have an hour to spare on Mondays and Fridays, if you'll come to me, we'll adjourn the rest until a future day.'

'Indeed I cannot—I cannot.'

'You not only can, but you will, Spencer; and so let me see you at my rooms at seven, A. M. on Friday,' replied Gerard deliberately.

'I'm afraid I can't offer to run in couples with Gerard,' said Tom, with a peculiar twist of the right corner of his mouth, contemporaneously with his right eyelid.

'How can I ever sufficiently thank you both?' said our hero, quite overcome by his feelings.

'By letting me see your bills,' replied Davis.

'And by getting a double second at least, and a double first, if you can,' said Hamilton.

'Come, Spencer,' said Davis, unrolling the formidable pile of unpaid bills which our hero produced according to his friend's request—'come, my boy, let us see who is first among the select! Messrs. Daub and Stipple, High street. Prints, of course—everybody has a taste now-a-days.'

'Yes,' observed Hamilton, 'there is a little devil on every one's shoulder, whispering "have a taste," and in consequence the mania for all sorts of pictures and engravings, from five shilling Zoraidas, or "Nature's favourites," to five guinea kings, queens, and dukes, is decidedly on the increase; and the immense amount of second-rate copies of second-rate engravings got rid of in this place at first-rate prices, would astonish every one who does not consider that in the majority of the bargains the seller has a sharp head, and the buyer firmly believes in the supremacy of his taste and the accuracy of his eye in works of art.'

'And besides that very philosophical reason, there's the notable science and practice of trouting.'

'Trouting, Davis! what on earth is trouting?' asked our hero and Gerard together.

'First cousin to soaping—soft sawdering—et id genus omne—tickling your consequence, as you tickle a sleepy trout on a hot day.'

'As how, Tom?' asked Hamilton.

'O just this way,' replied Davis, settling down for a story. 'Have you a copy of the "Bride of Abydos?" says a tolerable fresh Oxonian, as he lounges into our friends Daub and Stipple, in hopes of wasting a few moments, escaping the proctor, or securing to himself a copy of the favourite sister, cousin, or lady-love of Mr. Rubens Brush, whom the said Mr. Rubens Brush has made to do duty as a Minna—Miranda—Bride, and several other of the so-called portraits of the female beauties of Byron, Shakspeare, Scott, or Milton; and which happen to recall to our freshman's mind his last new partner at the last county ball, or the blooming Patty, the rosy-cheeked daughter of the portly landlord of the Cow and Trumpet in Witney. "O certainly, sir," replies the obsequious Daub, opening a fat portfolio of prints of beauties, babies, and brides; and as he diligently spreads them over the table, bobbing and smiling at each successive print, and bursting out into an encomiastic flourish at any face that seems to take with the poor "fish." Three times as many faces as were asked for having been selected, the fish asks for change for a note. He always pays ready money—'

'And very wise, too,' observed Spencer, with a melancholy look.

'Very foolish; why the chances are ten to one against your taking a receipt, and then in goes the print, or whatever it may be, to the ledger against you, and you are no better off than if you had never paid for it at all,' replied Hamilton.

'Maybe it may,' said Davis. 'But to our fish. Whilst Daub is looking for change, of course he lounges about the shop and pokes his eye-glass at every print and painting. "Fine print that, sir," says the fisherman, as he finds his fish staring at a first-rate Burnet, or a Raphael Morghen. "Yes, very fine indeed," replies the viridis homo; "the eye catches the lights well, and is never diverted from the main object—the principal figure of the group." "A very correct view of the case, sir; three and two are five—rising rapidly in price, sir—and five is ten—our last copy—and three makes five pounds, sir—very cheap, sir—only fifteen guineas." "Very cheap, indeed," replies the fish, "a very beautiful copy." "Will you allow me to send it to you?" "Why, I should never be able to pay for it." "O pray don't talk of payment, sir; money's no object to us, sir,—any time that will suit you, sir,—should be glad if you owed us a hundred pounds. Mr. Browning of Christchurch, I believe," continues the adroit angler, gradually playing his fish, and at last jerking him high and dry on the bank, and thereby booking the said picture to the said freshman, and the said freshman for fifteen guineas and as a good catch for some future day's sport. The bows with which he ushers the poor captive out of his shop are as many and as profound as if he were performing the interesting ceremony of the kow-tow before Tieng-lang-King-lang-Loco, the great grandfather of the sun, moon, and all the stars. "Five guineas a term will soon clear off that

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score," mutters the fish as he lounges up St. Aldgate's, entirely oblivious of the fact, that he has already twice, if not three times before, appropriated a similar sum, if not the self-same one, mentally at least, to the liquidation of some earlier and more lively ticks.'

'Is that all that comes of the tickling?' said Spencer.

'O no, Tom has hardly put him to sleep yet, he'll land him soon,' said Hamilton; 'he's getting up his steam for the next train; whirr, whirr, whiz, whiz—off.'

'Well,' continued Davis, 'terms roll on, and pictures roll in. "A pot lamb," a "Duke" or two, a "Nature," and half-a-score more "Clara de Guzmans" and "Imoindas," tend to swell the account; but still the day for payment seems, and is in reality, studiously and intentionally deferred by Messrs. Daub and Stipple, who firmly and in a most fascinating manner refuse any partial liquidation of the bill, greatly preferring a fresh order for one sovereign to a check for five. In one of the summer terms, a delicate note informs the victim, that, by the kind permission of the painter or the publisher, Sir Theophilus Megilp's last picture will be shown to their numerous friends by Messrs. D. and S. for two days only, previous to its being committed to the hands of that talented engraver, Mr. Copperplate Scratchface. Of course, such an opportunity is not to be lost, consequently Mr. Browning, multis cum aliis, strolls down to speer at the canvass, and to his unwonted astonishment returns a registered future proprietor of a proof impression of Mr. Scratchface's engraving of Sir Theophilus Megilp's most talented picture, "The Toad in a Hole," to be delivered to subscribers early in July.'

'Well, Davis, but at any rate they give immense credit,' observed our hero.

'Just the contrary, Spencer,' said Hamilton; 'they charge long credit prices on the score of a far-off day of reckoning, and contrive to call in their money within a year and a half, or even less.'

'By what means?' asked Spencer.

'By convenient losses, sham dissolutions of partnership, and make-up bankruptcies,' said Hamilton.

'Exactly—as my friend Mr. Trout Browning discovered, when his account had swelled to some forty odd pounds, and the long vacation had set in and given the duns time to be troublesome,' said Tom Davis, trying to continue his tale.

'Ay, I suppose Messrs. D. and S.,' said Gerard, 'dissolved partnership, having never entered into it, or Mr. Daub died conveniently, at least on paper, or even in *the paper*, or their London agent went off to America, as his employers relate, and compelled them to call in their debts.'

'I forget exactly which it was—but we'll set it down as a dissolution case,' said Tom.

'What a number of interesting circumstances generally attend these sad affairs! human nature appears under her most attractive form,' moralized Hamilton.

'Interesting circumstances—human nature—attractive form,' exclaimed his friends.

'Ay, you may doubt, and you may sneer. But so great a respect has Mr. Daub for Mr. Stipple, that, though the latter has treated the former with unexampled barbarity, and compelled him to dissolve their long and lucrative partnership, yet he still retains him as his foreman, heads his bills and notices with the old names, and retains the original firm over the shop front.'

'Supposing it is a case of convenient death?' suggested Spencer.

'O then, although poor Mr. Daub has died, much to his partner's pain and grief, yet, wonderous to relate, he has left behind him a twin brother, whom he has recommended to Mr. Stipple, so wondrously like him in voice, look, size, and manner, that every one is tempted to ask him whether he is himself or his brother.'

'Well, then, suppose the town agent has run,' said Davis, anxious to finish off Gerard and get to work again himself.

'Why then,' said Gerard, 'though Mr. Adams of Barbican has fled across the herring-pond, yet he has left a brother or cousin of the same name, a most honourable man, who carries on his business, and is Messrs. Daub and Stipple's agent, at the same address and with the self-same christian and surname as before.'

'Whatever the cause may chance to be,' said Davis, returning to his story, 'the accounts are placed in the hands of Mr. Thomas Screw, jun., accountant, who forthwith sends certain loving epistles to the debtors. By one of these epistles Mr. Browning is informed that Mr. T. Screw is empowered by Messrs. Daub and Stipple—in consequence of their dissolution of partnership—to apply for the *immediate* payment of the sum of 49*l.* 13*s.* 6*d.*, the amount of his account with the above firm, and is requested to pay the same within seven days to Messrs. Coutts and Co., Mr. T. Screw's bankers. On the receipt of this kind invitation, (which too often is but one of many of a like nature, as *the Long* is the rife time for dunning by these means such men as they look upon as nearly drawn dry, "dead men,") Mr. Browning cogitates for a day or two whether he can muster up the ready, and having nine times out of ten decided in the negative, informs Mr. Screw that he is sorry that he cannot have the pleasure of at present settling his account, but hopes to be able to do so on his return in October. At the same time, he hints to his correspondent that he is rather astonished at the application, as Messrs. D. and S. had so frequently refused to let him settle the account in the last term, and also suggests that although he has subscribed for a proof of the "Toad in a Hole," a proof of which he finds included in the account, yet that he has not as yet received his copy; and after all this, he is his obediently, R. Browning.'

'You must have taken that letter from my room,' said Spencer.

'Not he,' said Hamilton, 'it's an old one of mine.'

'Both wrong, and both right,' replied Davis; 'it's neither yours alone, Spencer, nor yours, Gerard, nor mine; but it is common property to all, and to three-fourths of the university besides. Why, I should not wonder if you laid claim to the answer to it—here it is—

"*Oxford, July* 20.

"Sir,

"Your copy of the 'Toad in a Hole' has been

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set aside for you, and will be sent to your residence on your undertaking to pay the expenses, or delivered to you on your return to Oxford. I am very sorry that, in consequence of a settlement of the accounts of the firm being *imperatively* demanded, no delay can be permitted in the payment of your debt; and, therefore, you have only yourself to thank if, after seven days from this, you compel me, through neglect of payment, to resort to legal means to compel the settlement of your long-standing account.

"Your obedient servant,

"THOMAS SCREW, JUN."'

'O, I'd swear to a dozen of them,' said Hamilton.

'Well, to cut the matter short,' continued Tom Davis, 'Mr. B. being now "super viridem frondem," alias "up a tree," rather than confide his difficulties to his friends, offers about a third down, and to pay five per cent. on the rest, hoping to clear off scores at Christmas. Now, as Mr. Screw and his clients only want to get a firm hold of their debtor, preparatory to further plucking, the former gentleman informs him that he has no doubt Messrs. D. and S. will be satisfied with the present stumping up of the said third part, if he will give them his bill for the remainder, with some five or six pounds for interest, stamps, and expenses of Mr. Screw and clerks, payable three months after date, and of course the bill is given. So far, so good. Now, as the bill is illegal, according to the statutes of the dons, it is forthwith handed over at about two-thirds, or half-price, to some third person, entirely unconnected with the university, and having no fear of the vice-chancellor, and all the horrors of discommonizing before his eyes.'

'And what on earth,' asked Spencer, 'is that discommonizing?'

'Cancelling his matriculation and license to cheat and dun, and visiting any unfortunate who buys of him with impositions, rustication, or expulsion, as the matter may be,' was Hamilton's reply.

'In about a month, this new hand ferrets out the acceptor, and threatens him with putting his bill or bills into immediate circulation, unless either paid before date, or accommodated with another bill for a larger sum and a shorter period than the other: the leader of a long file of accommodation papers, each successive one larger and shorter than its predecessor, until at last the acceptor is so hemmed in on every side, that he gets rusticated, expelled, or lodged in the county jail, unless he is wise enough to tell all to his governor, and he is courageous enough to bring the whole tribe into court, and expose their tricks, at some expense, and no little anxiety; and so ends the matter with the poor fish.'

'And, Lord have mercy on his soul! as the old treasurer of the Middle Temple used to say when he had to congratulate the new wigs on their being called to the bar,' said Hamilton with a grave smile.

'Live and learn; I shall steer clear of trouting next time,' said our hero.

'Yes, and tumble into some one else's net. You must get up over night to outwit an Oxford tradesman,' said Gerard; 'look at that nice trick of selling their small accounts.'

'Selling their accounts!' exclaimed Spencer, hardly alive to the trick.

'Ay, selling their accounts—their small matters of two and three pounds that it would hurt their credit with the men to dun for—these they dispose of to some pettifogging attorney for a valuable consideration, who immediately deluges you with writs, and as the debtors have no defence, obtains the money and his costs into the bargain.'

'Why, Stanley had fifteen writs from the same attorney in one day,' said Davis, 'and compounded for the whole affair for fifty pounds, three-fifths of which were costs.'

'Bankruptcies are not such bad things after all,' said Hamilton; 'they pay sometimes. You remember Smithers, the pastrycook of St. Aldgate's—he went smash one day, and I owed him some five or six pounds. In a day or two he called on me, and asked for his money; luckily I heard he was a bankrupt, so I refused him. "Why not?" said he, trying to look big. "Because you're a bankrupt," said I. "Then you won't pay?" "Yes, your assignees." "Damn my assignees." "O certainly, if you wish," I replied as I shut the door after him, "and you too." Well, I never heard of that bill again.'

'What, not from the assignees,' said Spencer.

'Devil a bit—the old rogue had written me off as paid in his ledger, in order that he might pick up a few stray accounts, and cheat his creditors. So, as I would not pay him, he dared not tell his assignees of the cheat, and I got my term's ices for nothing.'

'There's one comfort in being in difficulties,' said Spencer.

'What's that?'

'You escape those horrid touters—you're not worth bothering.'

'O, the inimitable grace with which they bob and bow,' said Hamilton, 'as they come into your room, and request to be allowed to show you some new waistcoat patterns just fresh from London, and the persevering industry with which they cover your sofa with valencias and satins, velvets and checks, the rejected of St. James and Bond Streets, and step back to catch a particular light on a shot silk, or a peculiar shade of a violent check. O, it's a perfect study!'

'And if you are not wide awake, it is not many minutes before you are booked for a rapid vest and a pair of inexpressibles, such as Oxford men alone wear, a cross between a green baize and a horse-cloth. The only way is to take it patiently, look on calmly until the touter has covered the sofa and a chair or two with his patches and remnants, then take up your cap, wish him good morning, walk off, and leave the deputy stitch to bless your eyes and pack up his shreds and patches,' said Davis.

'Well,' said Spencer, 'you may laugh at our men's dressing, but at least it is manly, and not too dandyish.'

'Why, how do you think I saw a Cambridge man dressed not three months since in King's Chapel?'

'The devil only knows,' muttered Tom, *sotto voce*.

'First, polished leather boots with paper soles, then, to ascend gradually, fair white ducks tightly

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strapped down over his feet, a richly open embroidered shirt, no waistcoat, his shirt collars worked round the edges, and turned down *à la* Byron, a rich satin tie very narrow and very gay, with a pin big enough for a giant, a white blouse made to fit tight, his embroidered shirt-cuffs turned very far back, his long black hair parted in the middle, and hanging down with a half-turn on each side, called a curl; and, to complete the affair, lemon-coloured gloves, and a whalebone cane with large gold head, and an embryo moustache.'

'Ay, looking as if he had borrowed his old nail-brush for the day, and stuck it over his lip to look fierce,' said Davis with a laugh; 'how he must have harmonized with the glorious old building!'

'Not so bad either—they were both specimens of the over decorated English,' said Spencer.

'Are you very busy now, Gerard?' asked Davis, with a thoughtful air.

'Not over head and ears—only a four-in-hand team at present—one logic, two great goes, and a little-go euclidist. But why do you ask?'

'Why, I was thinking that if you and I were to put together our reminiscences of certain sayings and doings of certain shopkeepers in this classic place, we might concoct a book worthy of the Clarendon, and of being recommended by the Golgotha for freshmen's lectures.'

'Ay, and call it "Town and Gown, or Credit Crumbs for Sucking Batchelors," with a motto of "Keep your receipts," and a finis, or tail-piece proverb of "Never show them to duns,"' replied Hamilton.

'Why not?' asked Spencer.

'Because,' replied Hamilton, 'in this classic city few tricks are more frequently and successfully practised than trusting to the loss of receipts by careless men, and testing their carefulness, or *vice versâ*, by an early and second delivery of the small account. *Ergo*, never show a dun a receipt, but throw the burden of the proof on him, as very often, when it has been accidentally lost, the dun's conscience, or rather his fear, will be as good as a stamped receipt in full.'

'I can well imagine that,' replied Spencer.

'Ay, and if you had seen Jeremy Botham, when he caught sight of his receipt in the vice's court, you would have recognized the benefit of Hamilton's bit of advice,' said Davis.

'And pray who was Mr. Jeremy Botham?' inquired our hero.

'Have you never heard Hamilton's story of Jeremy, a first-rate specimen of the pursuit of knowledge under difficulties. Come, Hamilton—tell it us for positively the last time.'

'Some other evening—it's too late now,' replied Gerard, hunting for his cap; 'there—there's the old ting-tang chiming for twelve, and I've got a cub at seven to-morrow.'

'Pooh, pooh, man; no time like the present—if you sleep quick, you'll soon make up a quarter of an hour. Besides, consider it will be something for Spencer to laugh about in his dreams to-night, and will tend to adjourn the nightmare to another time.'

'Well, I suppose wilful men must have their way, and so here goes for Jeremy Botham and his tale. "The Hon. Francis Chetwynd was a commoner of Christ Church, and as such owed Mr. Botham a small account for divers pairs of boots, and other leg covers; the last account for which he chanced to pay one day when I was regaling myself on a prime Woodville over his fire. Soon after he passed his great go, he received a visit—during a snug breakfast-party, of which I was—from Jeremy, respectfully requesting a settlement of his little account; it was under ten pounds. As soon as Chetwynd cast his eye over the bill, he quietly replied, "I shall not pay it, Mr. Botham."—"Very well, sir, just as you please," replied Jeremy, with great coolness; "then I shall be obliged to stop your degree."—"That will be some three or four years hence, Mr. Botham," said my friend, "as I have gone out in laws." Jeremy looked screwed, and threatened the vice's court. "I can't help that," replied Chetwynd, "but I distinctly refuse to pay the demand." "And why, sir?" asked his dun. "Because I never pay bills twice," was the answer. "Twice, sir?" "Twice, sir. A very pretty story indeed; do you suppose, sir, I would ask for a bill that—that—had been paid?" blurted out Jeremy, working himself into a heat. "I do," replied Chetwynd, turning his back upon the dun, and proceeding to dissect a fowl. "If, sir, you have paid it, as you say, show me the receipt," said Jeremy. "I certainly shall not do anything of the kind, as you ought to know well enough whether I have paid or not—leave the room." "Then I shall summon you, sir," growled Botham, as he banged the door after him with a muttered blessing.

'Ay,' said Tom Davis, with a laugh, 'like the pluck translation of ἐλαυνε πικρως, he shut the door sharply after him.'

'On the following morning,' continued Hamilton 'in obedience to a polite printed invitation from the vice Chetwynd, *cum suis*, or as Paddy would roughly translate it, "with his back," proceeded to the reverend gentleman's court. Botham was before him, looking as pleased as a child at its first piece of mischief, now talking to one witness, then running his eye over his ledger, and calling the attention of his proctor to some good point in his case. The cause now came on; and Jeremy having put in his ledger, proved the delivery of the goods, and swore in answer to questions from Chetwynd, that the account had not been paid, and that he *always* struck paid accounts off his books. His advocate proceeded to comment in no measured terms on the presumed defence, which of course he characterized as false, and also on the meanness of the defendant, congratulating the gentleman on the prospect of having to pay not only the debt, but also all the expenses of "this vexatious proceeding," as he was pleased to call it. The advocate having concluded his two guineas' worth, resoated himself, and Chetwynd was called on for his defence. "Sir," said Chetwynd, "I paid the bill to Mr. Botham himself on the 15th of March, in the presence of Mr. Gerard Hamilton of St. Luke's, whom I tender as my witness." When Jeremy saw me come forward, a cloud passed over his features, and a muttered anathema seemed to play about the corners of his mouth. As soon as I had told how I happened to be breakfasting with Chetwynd when he paid the bill to Jeremy, and that I saw the latter receipt it in the room, up jumped Botham's proctor, little Jenkins, to cross-exam-

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ine me. After some doubling and bush-fighting, I was forced to admit that although I believed the present bill to be the one I saw receipted, yet that I could not distinctly swear to it, though I could that it was for the same amount. Whereupon Jenkins submitted to the court that this only proved the payment of *a* bill, and not of *the* bill, and that it was not unlikely that the defendant had more than one bill with his client. To this the court assented, amid the hardly-suppressed applause of the Bothamites. However, we were not done yet. Chetwynd now produced a small bit of paper carefully folded up so as only to show one line of writing, and having placed Mr. Botham's foreman in the box, asked him, whether that was his master's handwriting. The witness readily assented. "Then, Mr. Vice-chancellor," said Chetwynd, looking fixedly at Jeremy, who evidently seemed uncomfortable, "I beg leave to tender a receipt for the present demand, signed by Mr. Botham on the 15th of March." Down went Jeremy's mouth, and out he ran as if old Nick himself, under the form of a stamped receipt, were at his heels.'

'Now that is what I call a refreshing story,' said Davis; 'it is as comforting as the receiving an accountant's letter requesting the payment of eighteen-pence for a skiff, only nine years and three quarters after date. Here, give me those tell-tales, Spencer, and I'll look them over to-morrow, and then we'll hold a cabinet council, and decide what bills shall be laid on the table. Good night, Gerard—goodnight, Middleton;' and away went Tom, singing 'all round my hat' at the top of his voice on the road to his candle-box, miscalled a bedroom.

'Spencer,' said Hamilton, 'not a word about what has been settled to-night—keep quiet, and contract your expenses during the remainder of this term—I will make the necessary arrangements with my cousin for your succeeding to the clerkship as soon as Hutchins gives up, and then, if you can make up your mind to stand a little coldness from acquaintances, and to work your hardest, all may get on well. Goodnight—come—no thanks—goodnight! Remember lecture to-morrow—get to bed, and sleep your hardest.'

'May I be thankful for these acts of unmerited kindness!' murmured Spencer, vainly endeavouring to repress his feelings, which at last found vent in tears.

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THE METROPOLITAN.

No. CXXVII.

NOVEMBER, 1841.

THE BLUE BELLES OF ENGLAND.

BY MRS. TROLLOPE.

CHAPTER XXIX.

ESCAPE—A LESSON TO ALL LADIES, OLD, YOUNG, AND MIDDLE-AGED, UPON THE DANGER OF BEING TOO DEVOTEDLY ATTACHED TO POETRY.

CONSTANCE had only remained in the second drawing-room long enough to give the retreating poet time to get down stairs, and Penelope therefore found her, as she expected, in her own room. Contrary to the established absence of all etiquette between them, she knocked before she entered, but being immediately desired to 'come in,' she opened the door, and perceived that her friend was walking about the room in very visible agitation.

'My dearest, dearest Constance!' she exclaimed, 'it makes me wretched to see you thus, you, who have turned my days of mourning into days of joy; must I see you the victim of blighted affection and disappointed love?'

The eyes of Penelope were full of tears as she spoke, and she even trembled as she took the hand of her friend. 'You are very kind, my dear Penelope,' replied Constance, with an air of considerable embarrassment. 'But you must not think about me, you must not indeed! It is such a joy to witness your happiness, and that of dear Markham, that for some time I think I can be contented to be without any other.'

'Alas! my dear girl, you know not what you say! I know better than you do the misery arising from anything that goes wrong where the heart is concerned. But let us hope the best, Constance? You know the pithy proverb, The quarrels of lovers, et cetera.'

'Then you think Mr. Mortimer did not hear what I said when he declared that *he required nothing further?*' said Constance deeply colouring.

Penelope thought this vivid blush denoted hope, and her kind heart shrank from the idea of destroying it; nevertheless she did not quite think that Mortimer had spoken without meaning; on the contrary, though flattering herself that all things *might* be set right again, she could not help feeling that there was much cause to fear for the ultimate consequences of an offence so deeply resented; and thinking that too great confidence on the part of Constance might be injurious to her cause, she said, 'My dearest friend, I would neither have you hope nor fear too much. It is impossible to believe that such a devoted attachment as Mortimer's for you can be wiped out and destroyed by the folly and impertinence of Mr. Weston, or by your own thoughtlessly gay reception of it; and yet, my Constance, it would be folly to deny that the unfavourable impression made thereby was no light one.'

'But you think it is Mr. Mortimer's intention to return and apologise for his strange exit?' said Constance, with a look and tone that completely puzzled Penelope.

'Apologise! I did not quite say that, Con-

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stance,' returned her friend. 'I should rather suspect, indeed, that he would expect apology from you.'

'Apology from me? *C'est un fort, par exemple*, as our delightful Mr. Weston would say,' returned Constance, with so little of sorrow or alarm of any kind in her manner as to completely overthrow all the views which Penelope had taken of the case, and led her to believe that she had most unnecessarily alarmed herself.

'You understand him better than I do, I have no doubt, Constance, and therefore I shall expose my blundering by no farther conjectures. He will be at your feet again in an hour or two, as you perfectly well know, I dare say,' replied the greatly comforted Penelope.

The incomprehensible Constance now turned pale, and having remained silent for a moment, said in a voice of the deepest gloom, 'Penelope! do you really think so?'

'How can I doubt it, when I see you treat the matter so lightly?'

'*Lightly!*' repeated Constance with a shudder.

'My dear Constance, I never before found it so difficult to understand you,' returned her friend: adding gravely, 'I very much wish that you would tell me yourself what you think of the scene that has just occurred.'

'Then I will do so,' was the reply. 'I think Mr. Mortimer has advisedly and deliberately resigned all claim to my hand, and that in a most offensive and unjustifiable manner.'

'Is it possible that you can believe this, and speak it so composedly?' said Penelope.

'Not composedly, I do not speak composedly,' replied Constance, 'but I speak it with the calmness of conviction. Had I doubt about it, I might display more agitation.'

'And do you really mean, Constance, that you conceive your engagement with Mr. Mortimer to be at an end?' demanded the astonished Penelope.

'Most assuredly I do. Would you have me persist in holding him to it after the words which you heard him utter? ask John Markham's opinion on the subject, my dear friend.'

'Constance, my poor dear Constance! you are angry now, and fancy you could bear this separation without sinking under it. But I tremble to think of the revulsion of feeling which will follow when you are more yourself, Constance; it will break your heart!' There was so much true affection and tender sorrow in the accent with which this was uttered, that the heart of Constance smote her for not speaking some little word to set so much friendly anxiety at rest. Yet for the life of her she could not find courage to say, 'Do not be alarmed, Penelope; I shall not die of love for Mortimer!'

She would have given much to relieve this anxiety: but the remembrance—O so recent!—of Penelope's ill-concealed surprise at the suddenness of the attachment she had formed for this same Mortimer, now so lightly resigned, covered her with confusion, and the very utmost effort she could make towards being sincere, was by permitting something like a smile to dimple her cheek as she said, 'Shall I tell you, Penelope, what would be the best remedy for all my wayward feelings? If you will grant me the favour I am going to ask, I shall escape out of this great Babylon with but little scathe, I shall carry the conviction of having acquired considerable wisdom to comfort me; and moreover, I shall have before my eyes the result of the only right thing I have done since I entered its precincts. Will you let me be your bridesmaid and accompany you in your proposed expedition to the Isle of Wight?'

'Will I let you, Constance? Could there be anything imagined capable of giving me so much delight, did I not fear, dearest, that, despite the spirit with which you brave it now, you might, when the time comes—and it is only next week—repent the rashness of your departure, and drag at each remove a lengthening chain?'

'Do not let that idea trouble you, Penelope,' replied the enfranchised *fiancée*, turning away her head to hide the smile she could not entirely check. 'I believe I have a great deal of—of resignation on some subjects. And will you let me go then? and you do not think John Markham will object to it?'

'You do not name him with sufficient respect, Constance,' replied the happy Penelope. 'Captain Markham will not, as I have reason to believe, feel any very great objection to the presence of the lady who has hitherto acted as his guardian angel in this business.'

'God bless you both!' exclaimed Constance, kissing her. 'What a comfort it is to have one point of one's life upon which one can fix one's eyes without regret!'

No sooner was Constance left alone, than she set herself with very praiseworthy earnestness to examine the conduct of Mr. Mortimer, and the nature of her own feelings in consequence of it. Not the severest censor that could have been appointed to judge her conduct could have condemned her more severely than she was ready to condemn herself; and many were the crusty words and hard names with which her conscience battered and bruised her, as she looked back on the history of her feelings respecting him. But notwithstanding the very disagreeable nature of this occupation, a sensation of hap-

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piness that no sense of propriety could check, and that no self-reproach could smother, took possession of her heart, and the murmured 'Thank God!' with which her meditations ended, was most fervent.

Having recalled with great accuracy all that Mortimer had said during their last important interview, she thought, to use the language of her accomplished chaperon, that she owed it to herself to inform him by letter that she 'accepted of his resignation,' and she accordingly sat down and wrote as follows:

'In addressing you, Mr. Mortimer, for the last time, I am desirous of avoiding anything that may wound your feelings, or lead you to misinterpret mine. Believe me I feel grateful to you for the frankness of manner which enabled me at once to perceive the present state of your sentiments towards me, and I truly think that we have both reason to rejoice at the accident which has led to the dissolution of an engagement, too hastily formed perhaps to give any reasonable expectations of lasting happiness. Permit me to assure you of my very sincere good wishes, and to request that you will believe me always your friend,

'CONSTANCE RIDLEY.'

Her first sensations, after finishing this epistle, were those of unspeakable relief, that so would end the affair which of late had made her so completely miserable. But it presently occurred to her that it was possible the gentleman might choose to seek a final interview; and the horror into which this idea threw her might have convinced her, had any proof been yet wanting, of the lasting wretchedness she had escaped. She blessed the gentle Mr. William Weston in her heart of hearts, and determined not to lose any portion of the blessing he had brought her, by sending her letter while there was yet time for her dreaded correspondent to answer it in person. The quiet, unostentatious, wedding of Penelope was to take place on the following Tuesday; it was now Saturday, and having shown her letter to her still wondering friend, she locked it in her desk, signed and sealed, in readiness to be despatched to its address on the day she left town.

CHAPTER XXX.

A TOUCHING INTERVIEW, A CRUEL INTERRUPTION, AND AN APPOINTMENT.

WHILE this was going on in Bruton street, the poet, according to his invariable custom on all such heart-rending occasions, had the venetian blinds of his drawing-room let down, ordered chicken broth and green tea for his dinner, told his servant to deny him to everybody, and then threw himself on a sofa, to soothe his agitated spirit with 'the dear pages of some new romance,' till it was time to dress for the opera.

His sweet friend, Mrs. Gardener Stewart, had a box for the alternate nights during the season, and pitying fate doomed that on this present Saturday the box belonged to her. It was to the darkest corner of this tranquil retreat from sorrow that his harassed spirit transported him the moment he fixed his mind upon the question of whither he should go, and his body followed it without loss of time. On arriving at the Haymarket, he found his fair friend already there, shielded as usual from the encroachments of the general eye by the very largest and most effectual screen ever applied to such a purpose. Her dainty little feet were sustained on the cushioned seat of a chair, set opposite to her, and her almost recumbent attitude and languid eyes seemed to indicate that though declaring herself passionately fond of music, the listening to it was an exertion almost beyond her strength.

'C'est toi, ami!' she exclaimed, as the privileged poet appeared before her; and though it was also beyond her strength to hold out her hand to welcome him, she made such a movement with her fingers, as signified that he might touch them. He did so, not only with his own fingers, but with his lips likewise—a ceremony which he invariably performed whenever he wished especially to call upon her friendship and sympathy.

'My poor dear Mortimer, you are not well! you look harassed and unhappy, dear friend. For heaven's sake tell me what has happened to you?' said Mrs. Gardener Stewart, with an exertion of strength which spoke deeply, if not loudly, for the sincerity of her friendship.

'Alas! my best—may I not say my only friend? The only human being that perfectly understands me? Is it not to you alone, of all heaven's envoys upon earth, to whom I could open my lacerated heart without restraint, and without fear of misconstruction or reproof?'

'Alas, my poor Mortimer!' returned Mrs. Gardener Stewart, drawing forth her smelling-bottle from the little *sac* of gold embroidery which lay on the chair before her. 'Alas! how often am I called upon to repeat to you those touching lines—

"Nor peace nor ease the heart shall know
Which, like the needle true,
Turns at the touch of joy or woe,
And turning, trembles too!"

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Tell me, my too sensitive friend, what new sorrow it is that now dims that poetic eye, and lends a tone of such thrilling sadness to a voice attuned by Apollo's self. Say, tell me, Mortimer, what new grief has befallen you?'

'Oh! why am I here? Why have I left the still deeper shadow of my own solitary cell, but to tell you all? My lovely friend! This is the only consolation Heaven has left me, and without it I must soon be with those who are not! Ay, and should wish to be so!'

'Poor Mortimer!' she replied, the fringed curtains of her eyes raised sufficiently to show how effectually his words had 'filled their cups with tears.' 'Be very sure that, under every imaginable circumstance, you will find sympathy from me. Speak then, and fear not that the siren voice of Grisi should call off my attention. No! not even Rubini himself would be heard, were I listening to you.'

'Kind pitying angel! You shall indeed hear all,' began Mortimer, carefully placing himself so as to be invisible to the house, but audible to her—'yes, all!' But ere he could pronounce another word, the door of the box was opened, and, wonderful to tell, Mr. Gardener Stewart and one of his particular friends entered it.

'How do, Mortimer?' said the well-behaved Amphytrion, presenting two fingers to his lady's friend. 'My dear,' he continued, addressing his wife, 'let Beaumont have this corner, will you? He wants to study Cerito at his ease, for his gout won't let him stand in Fop's Alley;' and so saying, he obligingly, and with every precaution to avoid being troublesome, removed backwards a few inches the chair which sustained his lady's feet, placing another in the corner opposite to her for his friend. 'That will do, Beaumont, will it not?' said the good-natured man.

'Perfectly, perfectly, my dear fellow, and as I never speak, you know, I shall not be a troublesome neighbour to your lady,' was the reply; upon which Mr. Gardener Stewart nodded a tripartite nod to the party, and left them.

It would require a pen powerful as that of the tortured poet himself, to do justice to the sufferings which this arrangement caused him. He looked at the eyes of his friend, and the eyes of his friend looked at him. A slight glance at the chair beside her, invited him to sit down, but he shook his head, and muttered 'impossible!' She gave a glance at the venerable gentleman now lounging forward over the front of the box, which spoke eloquently of vexation and disappointment, and then said, 'When shall I see you again, Mr. Mortimer?' in a tone which all the world might have listened to with impunity.

'To-morrow? May I call on you to-morrow?' he replied, endeavouring to assume a manner corresponding to her own.

'Never was anything so unfortunate?' said she softly, but with great feeling. 'I am absolutely, quite absolutely obliged to go to-morrow to the dowager Lady Crighton's villa at Richmond; and I must of necessity remain there till Tuesday morning. But I will leave her almost at daybreak, if you will promise to call on me. My dear friend! will you call on me punctually at half-past five o'clock on Tuesday?'

Mr. Mortimer looked very nearly overwhelmed by the distant date of this appointment, but he saw not any appeal against it, and meekly bending his head in token of obedience, he retired with a sigh, which a woman of much less sweetness of character than Mrs. Gardener Stewart must have felt to be heart-rending.

CHAPTER XXXI.

A LOVE-AFFAIR BROUGHT TO A VERY HAPPY CONCLUSION —A WEDDING—A PHILOSOPHICAL EXAMINATION OF THE HEART OF WOMAN.

How Henry Mortimer passed this tedious interval it is impossible to say, for he made himself completely invisible till the hour appointed, when, pale, languid, and moving almost with the noiseless step of a ghost he presented himself to his expectant friend.

The melancholy story he had to tell is too well known to the reader to require repetition here; nor can any one who has perused the foregoing pages be at any loss to guess in what tone it was related, or in what spirit it was listened to:—neither party breathed a word, or even a sigh, that was not in keeping with their characters; and the result was, that the poet left the lady deeply convinced that, to a mind constituted with such exquisitely sensitive delicacy as his own, the friendship of such a woman as Mrs. Gardener Stewart outweighed in value the love of a thousand heedless girls, who knew not how unappreciable was the treasure offered in the affection of a poet's heart. On reaching his home, Mortimer sat down and wrote the following epistle to Constance.

'It would be but a useless labour, madam, were I to attempt any explanation of the feelings which drove me from your presence on Saturday last—were you capable of comprehending such feelings, you could not have

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caused them. The body has been too much overwrought by the suffering mind to permit my performing this dreadful duty before, and all that I have now power to say is, that I trust you will never experience such agony as you have caused.

'I remain, madam,

'Your very unhappy humble servant,

'HENRY MORTIMER.

'P. S.—It is, I trust, unnecessary to add, that these lines are intended to speak an eternal farewell!'

It so chanced, that the servant commissioned by Constance to convey her letter to Mr. Mortimer met his servant about half-way between the two houses, in the act of conveying his farewell epistle to her. The two men halted and greeted each other, each holding up to view the note he carried.

'That is half my trot safed, Jerry,' said the envoy of the poet, placing his despatch in the hands of his brother lackey. 'But, my eye, how gay we are! Which of your young ladies hav you been marrying this morning, that you wear such a dashing favour?'

'The eldest, the handsomest, and the best,' replied Jerry, with considerable animation. 'Our Miss Penelope was married this morning to Captain Markham, and your master's bride that is to be, as they say, set off with them as bridesmaid, and beautiful they both looked as two angels. The very last thing Miss Ridley did before she stepped into the carriage was to give me this letter for your master.'

'And that betokens more favours, and then I shall come in for my share,' replied his friend; after which the two Mercuries parted—Jerry to consign his charge to the hands of Mrs. Hartley, and the other to deliver his to his plaintive master.

The first idea of Mortimer, on receiving this letter, was, that it had been written in reply to his own, and, having dismissed his servant, he opened and read it under this impression: but there being something in its style which seemed not in accordance to his first idea, he recalled the man, and learned from him the fact that the two notes had crossed each other *en route*.

'Did the servant give any message with it?' demanded Mortimer.

'Only that Miss Hartley was married this morning, sir, and that Miss Ridley was gone off with her as bridesmaid.'

This was news that gave no pleasure to the poet. The setting off as bridesmaid to her favourite friend had nothing of that sad, repentant character about it which ought, in common decency, to have taken possession of the soul of one who had been raised so high and had fallen so low; and what made the emotion it produced the more vexatious was, that it was impossible for him to carry it to the footstool of Mrs. Gardener Stewart—for, till now, he had been accustomed, on every occasion of the kind, to listen to the soft breathings of her pitying sighs for the sufferings of the fair creatures to whom nature had denied the perfection necessary to their arriving at the once hoped-for bliss of becoming his wife. These posthumous pityings had furnished out a multitude of interesting interviews, which had left very sweet and tender impressions on his memory. But could anything of this kind arise upon his informing her that the lovely but insufficient Constance had left town as one of a gay bridal party to the Isle of Wight? O no! There was something of bathos in this that was revolting to him, and, after about half an hour's meditation upon it, he ordered his portmanteau to be made ready, and set off by the Dover mail, for the purpose of refreshing his spirits by passing a week or two in Paris.

* * * * *

If this mode of restoring the tranquillity of his spirits answered as well as that which Constance had imagined for herself, the termination of their tender passion produced no very melancholy effects on either of them. Having passed with great propriety through the trying ordeal of listening to the condoling lamentations of Mrs. Hartley, Margaretta and Caroline, on this 'excessively disagreeable termination of an affair that had been so much talked of,' the spirits of Constance rose to a degree of happy exhilaration that demanded her utmost efforts to conceal from observation. She longed to be on the hill-side at Appleby, that she might join her voice to those of the blackbird and the thrush in thanksgiving for the joy she felt. Perhaps she hoped to tame down a little this exuberant gaiety by paying a farewell visit to Mrs. Morley, for whom she had conceived an affection, the strength of which sometimes astonished herself, and the idea that she might perhaps be going to see her for the last time certainly did bring tears into her eyes. But she met no sympathetic melancholy in return. Mrs. Morley, it is true, caressed her with every demonstration of affection, but this was accompanied by so unusual a degree of hilarity as to suggest the idea, that the separation she came to announce was matter of joy rather than sorrow.

'And you are quite sure, Constance, that you will carry away with you no "starling to cry Mortimer," in order to console you for the loss of the poet?' said she, laughing, as she looked in the sweet tranquil face of her

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young friend. 'You are quite sure of this, are you, my love?'

'Quite sure of it, Mrs. Morley,' replied Constance, blushing, and avoiding the penetrating eyes that were fixed on her.

'Well, then, my dear, I really am very greatly in hopes that you will live to recover this tender disappointment!'

'I hope I shall,' replied Constance, steadfastly determined not to smile.

'If, happily, you *should* survive it, my love, I am not without hopes that we may meet again,' returned Mrs. Morley. 'I feel by no means disposed to utter an eternal adieu, unless, indeed, you should tell me that you would, for the rest of your life, rather avoid seeing any of those whom you have known during your acquaintance with your lost lover.'

'No, no,' replied Constance, too much in earnest to speak with any restraint; 'there can be nothing I should so earnestly wish to avoid as the danger of not seeing you again.'

Mrs. Morley looked very much as if she would willingly have said more about their future meetings, but, for some reason or other, she checked herself, and with an affectionate 'God bless you!' on the part of Constance, and a gay '*au revoir*,' on that of Mrs. Morley, they parted.

* * * * *

Well pleased as Mrs. Hartley certainly was to see her eldest daughter at the altar, before she again stood before it as a bride herself, she failed not to mark, by a multitude of little delicate circumstances, the contempt in which she held a choice which involved the necessity of such pitiful economy as attended all the preparations for this wedding.

'I presume, Penelope, that you will not think of sending round cards?—and as to wedding-cake, thank heaven! that is totally out of the question.'

'Just as you please, mamma,' replied the happy Penelope, caring not the fraction of a straw about cakes or cards either.

'And pray tell me—shall you make a point of my going to church with you?—I hardly think it will be necessary.'

'I shall be *very* sorry if you will not do me this kindness, mamma,' said her daughter gravely.

'Nay, dear Mrs. Hartley, you must not refuse us the honour of your presence,' said Constance coaxingly. 'Besides, do you know, I have actually taken the liberty of ordering you the very prettiest white bonnet and feathers that I ever saw to be sent home for you with mine—you will quite break my heart if you refuse to accept it.'

'My dear child—I really must scold you—but certainly I will go to church, if you both wish it. But I almost fear, my dear Constance, that the ceremony may be too much for you, after the painful circumstances which have so recently occurred. Take care not to task your strength too far, my love!'

'I shall be thinking too much of Penelope to have any leisure to bestow upon myself,' said Constance.

'Well, to be sure! that is most extraordinary! I should have thought you would have rather died than have gone to a wedding just now,' said Margaretta—'and, to tell you the truth, I really think it would be more delicate to avoid it.'

'It will not be a very public wedding, you know, Margaretta,' replied Constance, with the most perfect good-humour. 'Nobody need know anything about it but ourselves.'

'You won't give it up, then, though you have heard my opinion, which I assure you is that of your brother also?'

'No, Margaretta, I certainly shall not give it up,' said Constance quietly.

'And what in the world do you mean to do with your maid?' demanded Mrs. Hartley, with an expressive curl of her lip. 'You will not, I think, be able to pack *four* into a hack post-chaise.'

'Penelope has kindly consented to use my carriage,' said Constance, 'and that has a seat for two servants behind.'

This speech caused a very expressive look to pass between Mrs. Hartley and Margaretta, and, after the pause of a moment, the latter said, with the amiable familiarity of a sister elect, '*Your* carriage, Constance?—I was not aware that you had a carriage.'

'Very likely,' replied Constance; 'I have only purchased it lately.'

'Detestable impertinence?' thought the future Lady Ridley. 'How I hate and detest that girl! A pretty campaign she has made of it! And now she will have to drive home to her grandmother in a second-hand coach and three, having to confess that she has lost her half-caught poetical conquest by the way! To *my* house in London she shall never come—on that point I have most completely made up my mind.'

But these thoughts were expressed only by a little lambent, flickering sort of light in the eyes, which were drawn up into a peculiarity of expression, difficult to describe, but easy enough to understand.

'How in the world, my dear, could you contrive to manage such a purchase?' said Mrs. Hartley. 'Where and when did you go to look at it?'

'Captain Markham was kind enough to manage all that for me,' replied Constance, with imperturbable composure.

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'Rather a new sort of service for him to be employed upon, was it not?' said Mrs. Hartley, with a little laugh. 'I hope he has not run you into any great expense, my dear? I should be excessively sorry if anything of that sort were to happen, especially as everything has gone so wrong about other things, you know. I only hope your grandmamma will not fancy that *I* am to blame about any of it. I shall be excessively sorry, indeed, if she thought I had sanctioned your running into any extravagance.'

'All the expenses I have been indulging in,' replied Constance, with a smile, 'will be covered by the sum with which I provided myself for wedding-clothes.'

Margaretta lifted up her hands and eyes.

'I am sorry to hear you speak so lightly of that very painful business, my dear,' said Mrs. Hartley, solemnly. 'A match broken off is no jesting matter, I assure you.'

'I meant no jest upon it, Mrs. Hartley, and only alluded to the circumstance to spare you the uneasiness of fancying that I was running into debt,' replied Constance gently.

Constance, in truth, had taken the liberty of consoling herself for her lost lover by expending the money she thus alluded to, and which amounted to three hundred pounds, in supplying various little deficiencies in the preparations of her friend. A handsome second-hand carriage, in excellent repair, was one of the articles thus purchased—and, spite of all that the more elegant members of the family might think to the contrary, a more completely happy bridal-party never drove from a church-door than that which got into it after the performance of the ceremony which made the admired Penelope Ridley the wife of the poor John Markham.

'It will be better, I think, under all the circumstances, that you should take any breakfast you wish for *before* the ceremony,' said Mrs. Hartley, to her eldest daughter, when discussing the final arrangements for her wedding. 'A large and splendid breakfast-party is a very agreeable thing after weddings made upon different principles, but I confess, Penelope, I shall be glad if you will excuse my doing anything of this kind. Do I make myself understood?'

'Perfectly, mamma, and I think you are quite right,' was the cheerful and ready reply.

So from the church-door the party proceeded the first stage towards Southampton, the newly-married pair feeling blessed beyond their utmost hopes, and the happy bridesmaid, conscious of having caused the joy she witnessed, and full of her own escape, which every moment seemed to become more precious to her heart, looked the very emblem of gladness and of hope.

'Constance,' exclaimed Penelope, one day during the delightful month that followed, while standing *tête-à-tête* together on the terrace of their pretty garden at Ryde—'Constance, how comes it that you seem as happy from having lost your lover as I am from being united for ever and for ever to mine?'

'Because, as I presume,' replied Constance, colouring, 'we were not attached precisely in the same manner.'

'Yes, yes, I presume so too,' returned her friend, laughing; 'but how came you so greatly to mistake your own heart?'

'The blunder and the blame, the folly and the fault, with all the horrible mischief which might have followed, if Heaven had not sent an angel in the form of William Weston to save me, were all your own, Penelope,' replied Constance.

'Mine! What can you mean? For goodness' sake explain yourself,' returned the astonished bride.

'That you are "innocent of this, my dearest chuck," as far as intention goes, I do indeed believe,' replied Constance; 'and yet I have spoken nothing but the truth in accusing you. Do you remember a certain conversation, Penelope, which took place between us immediately after we came to town, respecting the literary lions of the age?'

'Not very distinctly; yet I do remember that we had such a conversation,' replied Mrs. Markham.

'Do you remember telling me, that although I should see at Lady Dort's the individuals whom I so eagerly desired to know, I had no chance whatever of being suffered to approach within the charmed circle of their intellectual world? Do you remember saying this?'

'Yes, I do: I remember it perfectly. It was the result of my own experience, and I thought it might save you from disappointment,' replied Penelope.

'Those words, dear friend, laid the foundation of all that followed. The intense mortification I felt from hearing you say that I must never hope to find any real genuine mental companionship among the gifted great ones whom I so languished to know, could only be equalled by the delight of thinking that, in the case of Henry Mortimer, at least, you were mistaken. What the feeling may most correctly be called which took possession of me, I really do not know;—whether it was vanity, enthusiasm, admiration, or sheer midsummer madness, I cannot say: all I know is, that it certainly was not love—and that Mr. Henry Mortimer made the same dis-

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covery, will ever be considered by me as the most blessed circumstance of my existence.'

'Perhaps, my dear, if I had assured you that it was absolutely impossible Mr. Weston could have condescended to address you on terms of equality, you might have fancied yourself in love with him too,' said Mrs. Markham.

'Perhaps I might—and if I had, I do not think I should have blundered more egregiously,' replied Constance.

CHAPTER XXXII.

TWO MORE WEDDINGS—A TROUBLESOME OLD ACQUAINTANCE—DOUBTFUL RECOLLECTIONS, AND RECOLLECTIONS NOT DOUBTFUL.

BEFORE the first happy moon of Penelope's wedded life had worn itself away, Mrs. Hartley had the satisfaction of attending her second daughter to the altar, in a style in all respects as agreeable to her feelings as the ceremony which preceded it had been the reverse. Settlements, dresses, jewels, equipage, bridesmaids, and breakfast, were all in the very first style of elegance. The mob, both at the house-door and that of the church, was everything she could desire; and the manner in which the police found themselves under the necessity of interfering, could not fail to be gratifying to all the most powerful feelings of her heart. Sir James and Lady Ridley, of course, both looked infinitely handsomer than they had ever done before; and if the most perfect sympathy could have ensured the future harmony of their existence, they had reason to hope for days of unbroken concord, for the intense satisfaction with which they both contemplated themselves, and all their belongings, was not only equal in quantity, but as precisely of the same tone as if the mind of the one had been the reflected image of that of the other. Mrs. Hartley, for sundry important reasons, was anxious that her daughter Caroline should accompany Lady Ridley in her excursion to Paris, and at length, though not without some difficulty, she achieved it; so that when this second bridal party drove off, that exemplary parent found herself alone in her house, and, as she would have been ready to declare to any one who would have listened to her, in the most lonely and low-spirited condition imaginable.

There must certainly be some innate feeling in the mind of all widow ladies blest with grown-up daughters, that a second marriage has something, in some way or other, objectionable in it. How else can we account for the sort of instinctive averseness which such persons invariably betray to announcing any new change of condition which they may contemplate?

Though the matrimonial project of Mr. Marsh and Mrs. Hartley was steadily adhered to on both sides, and little quiet *sub-rosâ* preparations for it were going on without intermission, not one single word on the subject had as yet been spoken to any member of the lady's family, nor had it been thought advisable by either to interrupt the smooth current of their dear Sir James Ridley's glittering progress towards matrimony, by calling off his attention to the affairs of his friend. All, however, is not lost that is delayed, and it was not long before the event, thus shyly kept in the back-ground, was permitted to shine forth in modest, middle-aged splendour before the public eye.

It was exactly three weeks after Sir James and Lady Ridley's flashing equipage had driven from Bruton Street, that the handsome and very fashionable-looking travelling carriage of Mr. and Mrs. Marsh did the same thing—the house being given up, and all sorts of orders given to the servants, sent back to Laurel Hill, that the mansion should be duly swept and garnished against their arrival, which was settled to take place in a fortnight.

It was on the day following that on which this last recorded wedding took place that Mrs. Captain Markham, by that time arrived at her beloved little home at the Cabin, received the following epistle:—

'MY DEAR PENELOPE,

'As nothing is so disagreeable to all parties as idle discussion upon matters already decided on, I have scrupulously and systematically avoided naming, either to you or your sisters, my intention of uniting myself to Mr. Marsh till the event had actually taken place. I am now his wife, and trust that the motives which have induced me to become so will be duly appreciated by every member of my family, as well as by the public in general. I owe it to myself, however, to state that nothing would have led me to take this step but a firm conviction that the doing so would be highly advantageous to my family in general, and to my unmarried daughter Caroline in particular. For her sake, dear girl, I have sacrificed a thousand feelings, which would have led me to devote the remainder of my life to the memory of your ever tenderly-lamented father. I trust that I make myself understood, and that in addition to the satisfactory approval of my own conscience, I shall have the pleasure of receiving the cordial gratitude of my children. We are going to set off in an hour or two for Cheltenham, where we intend pass-

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ing a fortnight previous to our arrival at Laurel Hill. With kind compliments to all inquiring friends,

'I remain, my dear Penelope,
'Your affectionate mother,
'CAROLINE MARSH.'

The surprise occasioned by the information thus conveyed to the Markhams was considerable, but the emotion amounted to little more. Penelope felt, and expressed, a very sincere wish that her mother might be happy, and then endeavoured to gratify the natural curiosity of her mother-in-law by describing the appearance and demeanour of her new stepfather. In this task her husband was called upon to assist her, and the family party, seated in the shade upon their lovely lawn, were thus engaged, when Captain Salmon, the ci-devant guardian of Constance Ridley, joined them.

The subject of their discourse was immediately communicated to him, and was received by a much stronger demonstration of emotion than any one else had betrayed.

'Married!' he exclaimed with the whole force of his lungs. 'The devil she is!' and then waving his hat over his head, he vociferated with the most hearty good-will, 'Hip, hip, hip! hurrah!' The whole party stared at him with surprise, and he stared at them in return with astonishment equally remarkable. 'Upon my soul, you take it very coolly, my good friends, and I really wish you joy of your imperturbable philosophy. The fact is, I suppose, that you are so tremendously in love, that no mundane considerations whatever have power to produce the slightest effect, Captain Markham. But in my humble opinion this good lady's marriage might be expected to cause a little more sensation among you.'

Penelope, who was much less intimately acquainted with the worthy veteran than the rest of the party, listened to all this vehemence with an air of being, *tant soit peu*, offended. She knew that her mother, in common with every woman who marries a man considerably younger than herself, had of course made herself liable to a variety of jocose observations, but that any such should be uttered before her was painful.

Captain Salmon perceived the unusual shade of gravity which shaded the countenance of the fair bride, and starting up, laid his hand on the shoulder of her husband, saying, 'John Markham, let me speak to you for a moment.'

The young man rose, and giving his arm to his old friend, they wandered away together down a winding path on the hill-side, which led to the river below. About one-third of the way down was a bench, placed at a small open space that had been cut in the abounding underwood. Having reached this, Captain Salmon seated himself upon the bench, and making a sign to his companion to do the like, he turned towards him, and said, 'John Markham, is it possible that you don't know what this good lady has done by marrying?'

'What she has done, my dear sir? Why, rather a foolish thing, I should think, as the man must be at least a dozen years her junior.'

'That's not it, Captain John. Is it possible that she has kept her children ignorant of the fact? or is it possible that she can be ignorant of it herself?'

'What fact?' replied Markham, looking greatly puzzled. 'My dear sir, I really do not know what you are talking about.'

'Then I shall have all the pleasure in the world in telling you, my dear fellow,' replied the old man, rubbing his hands in high glee. 'You must please to know, John Markham, that an accidental circumstance about the title-deeds of a bit of pasture land, making part of the Laurel Hill paddock, was the cause of my seeing a part of old Hartley's will immediately after his death. Though only a part, for the will was a very long one, I dare say I read a great deal more than I remember, for I can't say I ever expected to care so much about it as I do now. But there was one clause which made an impression on me, because it amused me, an old bachelor as I was, to perceive how anxious the poor gentleman had been to have, and to hold, the lady even longer than that very awful ritual, the marriage ceremony, specifies. In short, the will declares, that in case his beloved widow, Mary, or Jane, or Sally, or whatever it is, should contract a second marriage, fifteen hundred per annum of the income bequeathed to her by the will should be forfeited, and go immediately in equal portions of five hundred a-year each, to his three daughters. And if you did not know this before, Captain John Markham, I think I have brought you a very tolerably good piece of news.'

'Is this possible?' cried Markham, colouring with emotion. 'Upon my honour, Salmon, I hardly know how much five hundred a-year means, but I should think it must be enough to make my sweet girl comfortable, and if so, I am the very happiest fellow that ever lived.'

'Away with you then—clamber up the hill again, and tell her so; and remember, Markham, I don't know that this old bride knows anything about the matter. May be not. It is always right to think the best, you know; but it won't do for you to stand wait-

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ing, cap in hand, while that pretty creature up there, (who looks as happy in your father's cabin as if it was a palace fit for a queen,) is kept without knowing whether she has a house of her own or not. That won't do at all, and therefore I advise you to write a civil gentlemanlike sort of a letter directly, wishing her all manner of joy, and so forth, and stating that as your wife is now become entitled to five hundred a-year, you shall desire immediately to look out for a suitable residence for her, or any other phrase you may like better, that may announce the knowledge you have of the real state of affairs. And now, God bless you! I know you are longing to be aloft there with this news.' And so saying, the kind-hearted veteran continued his walk down the hill, leaving Markham almost overpowered by the intelligence he had received. Yet he felt that the communication he had to make to his wife, replete as it was with dear domestic hopes for the future, was nevertheless not without some mixture of embarrassment with it. That the fair-seeming Mrs. Hartley, with all her ceaseless professions of devoted attachment to her family, had intended to pass the clause in her husband's will *sous silence* appeared beyond doubt, and he knew Penelope too well not to be certain that the discovery of this would cause her great pain. But this drawback on the happiness that awaited them did not arise, for Penelope immediately, and with the most perfect sincerity, declared herself convinced that if her mother had ever been acquainted with this clause, she had forgotten it; and though not without fear that it would prove a disagreeable surprise, she never for an instant conceived the idea that it was even possible she could have been acquainted with it. Whether Mrs. Markham were right or wrong in this belief, is a point that it is by no means needful to discuss. Ladies do very often forget clauses in wills and settlements, and it is certainly possible that Mrs. Hartley might be one of them.

But be this as it may, the receipt of Captain Markham's letter at the breakfast-table of Mr. and Mrs. Marsh at Cheltenham, though it was written in the most obliging tone possible, produced a scene by no means of an agreeable description. The servant had been sent to the post for the daily newspaper, and the sight of the letter which was laid down beside it, and addressed to her in a hand with which she was not sufficiently familiar to recognize, made her exclaim, 'Who in the world can have found me out here, my dear love? I do believe that people of fashion *cannot* hide themselves. It seems to be a natural impossibility.' She opened the letter as she spoke, and casting her eyes immediately upon the signature, read, '"John Markham." What in the world can put it into his head to trouble me by fancying it necessary to write? I dare say it will not be very long before my pretty Caroline follows the excellent example we have all been setting her, and, upon my word, with so many new claims upon my time, I can by no means undertake to correspond with all my sons-in-law. You would not approve that, my dear, would you?' This was said as she negligently suffered the letter to hang dangling from her left hand, while she stirred her tea with her right.

'At any rate look at his letter, my dear Mrs. Marsh. There may be some particular reason for his writing,' observed her husband.

Thus admonished, the complacent bride set herself to do as she was desired, and became speedily convinced that Mr. Marsh was right, and that there was a particular reason for Captain Markham's opening a correspondence with her. Her complexion varied very shockingly, first becoming very red, and then very pale.

'Well! what is it?' demanded Mr. Marsh, rather impatiently.

'Why, it is the very oddest thing I ever heard of,' replied the lady, endeavouring to speak with composure. 'Penelope's husband makes a claim upon my income, in consequence, my dear, of my marriage with you, which is either altogether nonsense, or the most extraordinary thing that ever was. He says, in the coolest style possible, that the three girls are each to have five hundred a-year upon my marrying again. I am sure I have no more recollection of anything of the kind than the babe unborn, but there is no doubt, certainly, that it is *possible;* it might have been so, without my remembering it, for Heaven knows I was in no state to read wills when poor dear Mr. Hartley died. But the very strangest thing of all is, how in the world John Markham should ever get hold of such an idea. I am quite positive he never got it from Penelope. However, it is no good to torment ourselves about it one way or another. Is it, my love? Thank God! your noble fortune makes it a matter of very little consequence whether this meddling young man be right or wrong.'

During the whole of this harangue Mr. Marsh sat with his eyes fixed immovably on the varying countenance of his bride, while a frown that became more and more deeply impressed on his low, red-looking forehead, gave to his countenance an expression as little beaming with love as can well be imagined.

'A matter of little consequence?' he growled forth at length, like the first peal of thunder that comes to interpret the lowering aspect of

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a threatening sky. 'It is quite as well that I should tell you at first, as at last, Madam, that my fortune is not one that can make the loss of fifteen hundred a-year a matter of no importance. You never thought it necessary to inquire the amount of my fortune, and I therefore never thought it necessary to tell you. There was no great chance that we should be burdened with a numerous offspring, and so long as I knew that there was income enough between us to make such a figure as I desired, there was no need whatever to enter into minute calculations. As to settlements, we were both aware of the absurdity of saying anything on the subject. You had no power to settle anything on me, because your property was yours only for life; and this being the case, it would have been out of the question, let me have what I might, that I should settle anything on you. No wise man ever communicates to any one the amount of his fortune, unless he is compelled to do it. I, for one, never have, nor ever will, commit this folly. My attention, madam, in marrying you was directed solely to the amount of income, and if I find that yours falls short by fifteen hundred a-year, I shall most assuredly hold myself at liberty virtually to dissolve this joint-stock company of ours, and leave you to lament your unfortunate want of memory at your leisure.'

On hearing this, the lady could do no less than burst into tears, a ceremony which she immediately performed; upon which her spouse vacated his place at the breakfast-table, and walked out of the room.

CHAPTER XXXII.

A LETTER ON BUSINESS FROM A SENSIBLE WOMAN—ANOTHER LETTER ALSO ON BUSINESS FROM A SENSIBLE MAN.

Mrs. John Markham was heartily and sincerely attached to her husband's family, every one of whom both deserved her affection, and returned it. Nevertheless, it is most certain that the hope which now for the first time seemed within the reach of probability, that she might possess a dwelling of her own, and thereby be enabled to perform that dearest of all duties to a loving woman's heart—

'Well-ordered home, man's best delight to make,'

did open before her a perspective of enjoyment, which it was impossible for her to contemplate with indifference. But she would not permit herself to dwell upon it so long as her husband's letter to her mother remained unanswered. Sometimes she thought that Captain Salmon's intelligence might prove to be altogether unfounded, and oftener still she trembled lest, if discovered to be true, it might be the means of producing a degree of family discord that it was terrible to think of. This very reasonable anxiety, however, was not permitted to torment her long, for within a week she received the following letter from her mother:

'My dear Penelope,

'Never was astonishment greater than mine on receiving your husband's letter respecting the clause in your father's will. That the statement made therein is perfectly correct I have ascertained; but how I can have so long remained ignorant of it, is something truly astonishing. The devoted affection I have ever shown you all, must convince every one who hears of the circumstance, that, considerable as the loss is to me, I must hail the knowledge of it with the most heart-felt delight. You have all heard me for years deplore the unfortunate state of dependence in which it was your father's pleasure to leave you. Heaven knows that, during the whole of my widowed life, this has been the ceaseless source of the most bitter regret to me. I am little likely, therefore, to lament a discovery which at once and for ever removes the cause of this regret. I am sorry to say, however, that Mr. Marsh does not see the thing exactly in the same light as I do: but that, on the contrary, he has the unkindness and the stupidity to reproach me with not having told him what I did not know myself. This certainly, and I am sorry to say it, does not speak well either for his understanding or liberality, and were choice still in my power ———. But it is in vain to look back; all I can now do is to content him, if I can. I am not without hopes that Sir James Ridley will consent to wait for my death before he claims his share of this money, and I have no doubt that I shall be able to settle everything satisfactorily with Caroline, who of course cannot object to pay handsomely for her board; therefore, my dear Penelope, you are the only one whose claim is likely to be inconvenient just at present; and I owe it to myself to say this, with all the openness and candour of my temper. If your husband could make it convenient to accept three, or, let us say, two hundred a-year instead of five, it might make a great deal of difference in my domestic felicity. Do I make myself understood?

'I remain, my dear Penelope,

'Ever your affectionate mother,

'Caroline Marsh.'

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On receiving this letter, Penelope put it into the hands of her husband without a word of comment. A slight smile passed over his features as he read it, but he too avoided all criticism on its contents, only saying, 'I think, my love, that as the most important part of this letter is, in fact, addressed to me, it will be better that I should answer it.' Most readily did his wife agree to this; nay, so little did she wish to mix herself with any of the details of the business, that she was well pleased to learn, in the course of the day, that his letter had been sent off without her seeing it. The letter itself will best explain *why* he had spared her the trouble of reading it. It ran thus:

'My dear madam:—My wife having communicated to me the letter she has received from you, I have taken upon myself to reply to it, as it is in truth I alone who can do so. My situation, with respect to income, is certainly not precisely the same as that of Sir James Ridley; nevertheless, I beg to assure you that whatever line of conduct he may think it right to adopt in this business, I shall hold myself in readiness to follow the same.

'I remain, &c. &c.,

'J. Markham.'

It was but rarely that two days, or even one, passed without a visit from Constance to Penelope, or from Penelope to Constance; but it so happened at the time when this interesting correspondence was going on, that old Mrs. Ridley had a family staying with her from a distant part of the country with whom the Markhams were not acquainted, and this circumstance had interrupted their usual intercourse; but on the evening of the day that the above-cited letter of Captain Markham was sent off, Constance made her appearance on the lawn before the cabin, where as usual the whole family was assembled, and, forgetful for the moment of the singular circumstances attending the discovery on which she came to congratulate them, and which were not of a nature to be perfectly agreeable to her friend, she uttered an exclamation of unmitigated delight at the intelligence, which she had that day received by a letter from her brother.

'The business is not quite settled yet, dear Constance,' said Penelope, colouring: 'but God bless you, dearest, now and always, for all the interest you take in us.'

'Not settled?' said Constance, too eager in her joy to perceive the shade of restraint in the manner of Penelope; 'not settled? how can that be? I do not understand you.'

Penelope did not answer, and therefore her husband did, and with all his habitual frankness. 'The settling your friend talks of, dear Constance, depends altogether upon your brother. If he declines receiving the income his wife acquires by this forfeiture, I shall do so likewise, and so I have told Mrs. Marsh.'

'If that be all,' replied Constance demurely, and endeavouring by all possible devices to conceal her inclination to laugh—'if that be all, I have it in my power to prove to you that the matter is quite settled. Hear what my brother says about it.' She then drew forth the epistle she had just received, and read from it the following sentence.

'Though it is a trifle hardly worth mentioning to a man of my fortune, I dare say my grandmother will be pleased to hear that I have come into five hundred a-year by Mrs. Hartley's marriage. She wrote to tell me of it, which was all fair enough, but she was silly enough to add that she would rather not pay it, if I would be so kind as to excuse her—she did, upon my life and soul. Isn't it queer that such a sensible woman could talk such nonsense? However, of course I made short work of that joke, and told her that my lawyer would take care and see that I got the money regularly. But by good luck there is no danger of any mistake about that, as all the money is in the funds, and the transfer will be made out to all the three parties concerned immediately. It was a capital joke, wasn't it, to fancy I'd give it up?' As soon as the perusal of this document was concluded, Constance repeated her congratulations, and then for the first time it seemed as if the whole circle ventured to confess their delight at this most unlooked-for acquisition.

'It would have been the study of our lives, my dearest girl,' said old Markham, looking fondly at his new daughter, 'to have rendered these close quarters as comfortable to you as we could; and you won't fancy it proceeds from want of hospitality, when I tell you that I glory in thinking that you and that luckiest of all lucky fellows there will have a home of your own.'

'Bless her, she will make a paradise of it, wherever it is,' said the old lady. 'I do think that, take all things together, we are the most fortunate family that ever lived—I do indeed.'

'But it must not be too far away, Penelope,' cried one sister.

'No, indeed! We could not bear to lose her again, now we have once had her,' said the other. And then the whole party set about considering what pretty places there were within beautifully easy distances, that were to be let, or might be to let, and about which it would certainly be worth while to make some inquiry.

This delightful occupation lasted till the moon rose high above their heads, and then John Markham, his wife and youngest sister,

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escorted the happy Constance home, who, without any mixture of feeling concerning Mrs. Hartley that could in the slightest degree lessen her delight, set such an example of joy and gladness concerning what had happened, that the spirits of Penelope seemed to follow hers, and she felt all the happiness of having, to the extent of her very fondest wishes, embellished the destiny of the man she loved.

* * * * *

'The happy Constance!' Could Constance, the disappointed, the forsaken, the affianced, and the unaffianced, could she, returned from the brilliance of London to the deep retirement of Appleby, all her gay hopes flown, and all her enthusiasm vanished, could she be indeed 'the happy Constance?'

Yes—everything is comparative, and compared to the last week or two she had passed in London, the present was a period of almost unmixed happiness to her. Perhaps she was conscious, too, that she was the better and the wiser woman for all that had happened to her. She remembered with tingling cheeks the unmitigated confidence in herself which had made her shrink from the idea of asking the advice of any human being in the choice of a companion for life, and with genuine and deep humility she now thanked Heaven for having saved her from the effects of it. Her bright eyes never opened to the day without her murmuring to herself, 'I am free!' and though there might be some recollections of her London campaign which would, in spite of all she could do to prevent it, suggest the idea that, but for her own folly, she might have been happier still, she drove the thought from her with such pertinacious resolution, that she flattered herself it was growing weaker every day she lived. It might be so—and at any rate it is certain that she was gay, blooming, and contented.

* * * * *

The arrival of Mrs. Marsh at Laurel Hill was delayed for several weeks longer than was expected, and when she came at last, it was in a style far unlike the scheme she had laid down for herself. What had become of Mr. Marsh she did not deem it necessary to explain even to her daughter Penelope, merely saying, in answer to her inquiries, that it did not suit him to come into the country at present. Of her neighbours she saw nothing, desiring her daughter, whom she only occasionally permitted to approach her, to circulate a statement of her being in a very precarious state of health, and in fact too ill to leave her room. In this manner she passed about three weeks at her mansion, always actively employed, the moment her daughter left her, in collecting together and carefully packing whatever was at once the most valuable and the most portable of her possessions there. The complaint from which, by her own account, she was suffering, she called incipient inflammation of the lungs, stating that she had already taken London advice, and been assured that it was absolutely necessary she should make immediate preparations for going to a milder climate—talked of Nice and of Naples, of Malta and Madeira, but declared she could settle nothing definitively till her 'darling Caroline' rejoined her in London. She positively refused to see any one; not even Constance, nor any of the Markham family, were excepted from this general exclusion, to account for and excuse which, Penelope was desired to state the opinion of a London physician, that the act of talking was replete with danger to her.

At length she informed her daughter, that having concluded all her business, she should take her departure on the morrow, and then dismissed her with an embrace about as chilling as that with which she had dismissed her on the morning of her marriage.

On the first Saturday after her departure, the county paper contained a flaming advertisement announcing that the elegant mansion of Laurel Hill was 'to be let furnished, and entered upon immediately.'

* * * * *

This strange arrival, and still stranger departure, filled the whole neighbourhood with gossip; but like other wonders, it died its natural death at the expiration of the allotted nine days, and the still closed windows of Laurel Hill seemed all that remained to remind the county of the umquhile Mrs. Hartley.

It was soon after this seemingly peaceable oblivion had settled upon the unsatisfactory adventures of Mrs. Marsh, that Mrs. Markham the younger was seen, one fine morning in the month of September, approaching the glass door that opened from the drawing-room of Appleby Hut upon the lawn. She found Constance and her grandmother exactly as she had expected to find them; the latter mechanically employed in plying her knitting-needles, and the former in reading to her. The sight of Penelope in the distance was always a signal for the work or the book of Constance to be thrown aside, while, let the weather be what it might, she threw open the glass door, and flew out to meet her.

'Why have you not brought my little Mary with you, Mrs. John Markham?' said the old lady reproachfully.

'Because your little Mary was engaged in some notability with her mother,' replied Penelope, 'and I, having that most precious of all commodities, some news to bring you,

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did not deem it proper to wait for her. John had scampered away to the post-office with his answer to the letter that conveyed my news; so here am I, all alone, like a good gossipping neighbour as I am, determined to bring my budget to you before any part of it could be picked up by common fame, and travel here before me.'

'Well, my dear, and what is it?' said the old lady, with as much or perhaps rather more eagerness than if she had been five-and-twenty.

'I will read you the letter, ma'am,' replied Mrs. Markham, drawing forth the document which she seemed to consider as so important, 'and then you will be pretty nearly as wise as I am on the subject. Now hear. "My dear Markham."'

'But who is it from, my dear?' cried Mrs. Ridley, interrupting her. 'The name of your correspondent may, perhaps, throw rather a useful light upon his communication.'

'No, my dear madam, I do not think it would help you at all. And as to Constance, she shall guess who it is, after she has heard the letter. And now I will begin again. "My dear Markham;—The advertisement of a house to let in the north of Devon, and, if I mistake not, in your immediate neighbourhood, has just caught my eye, and when I tell you that I want for the summer exactly such a place as the said advertisement describes, I know you will excuse my asking you to send me some farther particulars of it. I shall want tolerably good stables, you know, and should like to take it for one year certain, if it should prove to be the sort of thing I want. Can I be accommodated at any rustic hostelry in the neighbourhood, if I come down to look at it? And may I look to you to guide my steps, and instruct my ignorance, if I present myself at your door? With my best compliments to Mrs. Markham, I remain faithfully yours, ***********." And now, Constance, whom do you think it is from?'

'A more idle question you surely never asked, Penelope. How in the world should I be able to guess?'

The tone in which these words were spoken was intended to be as indifferent as the words themselves, but it was not so; and the old lady, whose ears were as quick as ever, looked at her keenly for a moment, and then exclaimed, 'Mercy on me, Constance! You do not suspect that it comes from that fantastical fellow Mortimer, do you? Remember, my dear, if renewed proposals should come from him and from William Weston, I shall throw all my might and interest on the side of the latter.'

'Very well, grandmamma—we shall not quarrel on that point, I believe. But I do not suspect that this letter comes from Mr. Mortimer.'

'Some other person has occurred to you as more likely, perhaps?' returned Mrs. Markham, fixing her eyes upon her.

'Every name I ever heard I should think more likely than that of Mr. Mortimer,' replied Constance, turning back the pages she had been reading, as if in search of some particular passage.

'Never mind the Quarterly, just for five minutes, Constance,' said her friend. 'I must go towards the post-office to meet Markham, and I want first to hear you say whom you think this letter is from.'

'I don't know,' replied Constance concisely.

'Does that mean, my dear, that you do not positively know who it is from? or that you do not know whom you think it is from?'

'Upon my word, Penelope, I do not think about it,' said Constance, with a little movement of impatience; 'perhaps it is from Daniel O'Connell.'

'No, my love, Markham is not in correspondence with Daniel O'Connell. Guess again, Constance.'

'There is some joke between you girls that I cannot understand,' said Mrs. Ridley, looking from one to another. 'Constance looks almost in a passion, and you, Penelope, look very much as if you enjoyed it. Upon my word, you are both of you very provoking. I wish you would put an end to all this foolery, and tell me at once who this person is, who seems likely to become our neighbour?'

'The letter, ma'am,' replied Penelope, placing it as she spoke before the old lady, but with her eyes still furtively directed towards her friend, 'the letter is from Mr. Fitzosborne, the gentleman to whom my husband owes his promotion.'

'Indeed, my dear! Well, then, I do call that very good news. I have not forgotten what John Markham said about him. He must be a noble fellow, that is certain. But I really don't see the object of your joke about making Constance guess. How could she guess, my dear?'

Constance was by this time earnestly engaged in looking at some animal or vegetable production which she had found, or expected to find on the outside of the glass door, and had very much the air of intending to walk off; but she was probably prevented by the conversation which followed between her grandmother and Mrs. Markham.

'I thought,' said the latter, 'you would be pleased to hear that Markham's generous friend was likely to come among us. And in truth I came charged with a message from

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my mother, which will prove to you that we reckon upon your sympathy, my dear Mrs. Ridley. Of course we cannot let one to whom we owe all our happiness take up his quarters at the *humble hostelry* he talks of, and Markham has therefore written to tell him that his humble hostelry must be our humble home. Now this we can in no way contrive, unless you will take pity on us, and let Betsy and Mary come here to sleep as long as he stays.'

'To be sure I will, my dear, and delighted to do it. But stay,' continued the warm-hearted old lady, 'I think we can manage better than that, too. Let Mr. Fitzosborne come here. We are too near and dear friends, I hope, to make it appear extraordinary that my large house should be open to eke out your small one.'

It was evident that notwithstanding the earnest attention of Constance to the object she was examining outside the door, she was not out of hearing, either in mind or body, for at this moment she suddenly turned round, and said abruptly, 'No, no, dear grandmamma! do not propose that. Let Betsy and Mary come here. I shall be so glad to have them! And besides it will be so much pleasanter for the two friends to be together.'

Penelope listened and looked at her, and something like a smile seemed to threaten a jesting reply, but she checked herself, and said with every appearance of being in earnest, 'Thank you a thousand times, my dear Mrs. Ridley, but I think Constance is right. I dare say Mr. Fitzosborne will not stay very long, and I know that Markham would be sorry to lose an hour of his company.'

'Well, well, let it be exartly as you think most agreeable and most convenient,' replied Mrs. Ridley. 'A room for the dear girls shall be ready whenever they like to come.'

'Thank you a thousand times,' returned Penelope, preparing to depart, but pausing for a moment before she passed through the door, she said to her friend, 'Will you take a walk with me, Constance, towards the post-office, to meet Markham?'

'No, thank you, dear Penelope. I would rather not walk this morning,' was the reply.

TRAFALGAR.

BY THE HONOURABLE JULIA AUGUSTA MAYNARD.

The fleet-wing'd ships in full array
Impatient chide each brief delay.
On! on! ye brave; to battle fly!
Go forth to death or victory!

The thund'ring cannon's opening roar
Reverberates from sea to shore;
And dark as earth's primeval night,
The blackness of that sulphurous fight.

The battle rages—fiercely shine
The flashing sabres through each line:
And o'er each deck, and o'er each prow,
The crimson flood shall quickly flow.

The shock, the din, the madd'ning strife,
Unsated but with human life,
Shall surely doom, where many meet,
Each surge to be a winding-sheet!

Now furiously the weapons clash,
Now onward gallant spirits dash,
Till slaughtered heaps and oozing gore
Reveal that valour lives no more.

Each brow is black with demon hate,
And mercy's voice entreats too late:
Each stroke is death; each eye of fire
Shall gleam in triumph, or expire.

And carnage reign'd and warriors fell,
The cannon's roar their only knell,
Until a deeper, sadder cry
Rose with the voice of victory.

One awful burst—the bolt hath sped!
'Tis done!—immortal Nelson's dead!
The mighty chief, the glorious star
Of conquest and of Trafalgar!

THE BACHELOR OF FIFTY.

BY CHARLES DE BERNARD.

THERE are, in the fashionable quarters of Paris, certain spots, which recall to mind the terrace on which sister Anne kept watch in the castle of Bluebeard. In fine weather, at the hour when ladies walk or drive, pay visits or shop, an observant person cannot pass the places to which we allude, without remarking there a considerable number of individuals of the male sex, generally young, sometimes with an air of distinction, and always as correct in their dress as the lover in a vaudeville. In proportion as their temper is feverish or phlegmatic, these interesting personages remain motionless as statues, or measure out with irregular steps a limited space, like a soldier at his post. Amongst these volunteer sentinels, there are some who, while on duty, make no discovery save that the grass would be green if the sun did not make it dusty, and these in general return to their quarters with an air of deep melancho-

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ly. Others, more fortunate, finish by gathering the fruits of their patience, and see their anxious expectation rewarded by the charms of that period, called, in the euphuistic style of our forefathers, the hour of the swain.

To this latter class belonged a young man, of very good mien, who some years since, about the middle of March, had taken his station, and seemed likely to take root, at the entrance of the Tuileries Gardens, opposite to the Rue Castiglione. From two o'clock till four, at that season when the genial rays of the spring sun kiss and gild the green buds of the limes and the chestnut-trees, this spot provides for inflammatory beings a resort scarcely less inviting than the *balcon* of the opera in the evening. The Allée des Feuillans, in fact, then disputes with the Bois de Boulogne the privilege of exhibiting its swarms of youthful beauties, who flock thither to expose their pale cheeks and eyes heavy with the sleepless nights of the winter campaign to the vivifying influence of a pure air and a fresh breeze. Countless, therefore, are also the *paletots* and the *rédingotes* of all shades and colours, from *noir de fumée* to *blanc de farine*, which at that favoured hour make their appearance in the gardens. The infantry of fashion, in particular, are collected there from the four points of the compass. Those alleys would almost seem to be their peculiar property, with such majesty do they tread them. They recognize, there, no superiority; not even that of the dashing sportsmen of the Jockey Club, to whom, elsewhere, they unhesitatingly yield precedence, for self-esteem varies according to the scene for its display, and many a man bows low on the first floor, who would draw himself up with dignity on the second. In the Champs Elysées, the horseman who canters along the road, though his steed be but a hack, eclipses the modest *piéton* of the foot-path; but in the Tuileries these distinctions are swept away. The gates which admit poodles, led in chains or silken leashes, are closed inexorably against horses; and every lounger is estimated at his own personal value, and no more. On the gravel-walk of the Feuillans all boots are equal, whether adorned or unadorned with spurs.

The young man, whose stillness we have described, appeared completely isolated in the midst of the crowd which the attractions of the bright sunshine had tempted forth. In vain did the most brilliant equipages stop at the entrance of the gardens; in vain did the most beautiful women almost touch him as they rushed by; nothing could distract his attention from the point on which it was fixed. Leaning against the iron gate, a few paces distant from the sentry-box which bears the number 33, his eyes were invariably turned in the direction of the Rue de la Paix. If they wandered for a moment from their line of observation, it was but to consult his watch, whose hands seemed to him, as to all who wait impatiently, to lag and loiter lazily on the dial. In about half an hour his countenance, which had been clouding over for some minutes, suddenly cleared up. At that instant, a brown landau, drawn by a pair of handsome greys, appeared from behind the Colonne Vendôme. Notwithstanding the distance, the young man recognized the carriage at a glance, and watched its approach with a meaning smile. He allowed it to enter the Rue de Rivoli before he changed his position, and then commenced walking along the terrace at a slow pace, yielding to a feeling of prudence, which lovers would do well always to obey.

The landau drew up at the gate, and three persons alighted from it. The first was a man of about thirty, with a stiff gait and a countenance of assumed gravity, who affected maturity of age with as much study as older people employ to put on an appearance of youth. Dressed in black from head to foot, his throat encased in a white cravat, his face scrupulously shaven, his eyes protected by spectacles which cast a bluish tinge upon his doughy cheeks, he exhibited in himself a characteristic specimen of that class, so important at the present day, which from taste, calling, or ambition, devotes itself to the studies of the closet. Advocate or journalist, magistrate or man of letters, this individual, be his profession what it might, carried his head so high, spoke in a tone so decisive, threw out occasionally from behind his spectacles a glance so peremptory,—in a word, seemed so secure of his superiority, that those who saw him for the first time must have been of a very sceptical nature not to feel the same conviction.

The second person who got out of the carriage was considerably older than the first. He must have been very handsome twenty years before, and although his grey hair announced the decline of middle age, he yet preserved those advantages of appearance which age sometimes respects, whilst it destroys all the rest. His figure was noble, and his features remarkably distinguished. You would have sought in vain, either in his person or dress, for any of those fruitless artifices which men, growing old unwillingly, employ, to impose on others the illusions with which they flatter their own vanity. In him everything was simple yet elegant, serious yet unaffected. The habitually sad expression of his countenance might, it is true, give rise to the supposition that he had not said

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farewell to the pleasures of youth without regret; but that very gravity was not without its charm, and it was difficult to observe him attentively, without experiencing those sensations at once sweet and melancholy, which the pale serenity of a fine evening in autumn inspires.

Instead of imitating his companion, who had already entered the gardens, the elder of the two gentlemen turned to offer his hand to a third person, whose beauty alone satisfactorily explained the long-expectant watching of the first actor in our tale. She was one of those young and supereminently Parisian women, who combine with natural charms all those conventional graces which modern education developes, at the expense, sometimes, of less brilliant but more solid advantages; false diamonds, it may be, but so well cut, and set with so much taste, that it requires more cynicism than men commonly possess, to seek for and lay bare their defects. This attractive creature, whose fair hair harmonized well with her soft brown eyes and delicate complexion, wore a dress of maure-coloured silk, and over it a short cloak of black velvet, trimmed with ermine. A hat of the same material as the cloak, and an ermine muff, completed a costume well suited to the temperature of the day, which partook at once of the bright sunshine of spring and the crisp frostiness of winter.

On alighting from the carriage, the young lady took the arm which her remaining escort offered, and mounted with a light step the stairs which lead to the terrace of the Feuillans. She had hardly passed the gate, when, without turning her head, she cast to the right one rapid glance, which fixed itself at once with admirable precision on the gentleman whose motions we before described, and who had halted at no great distance. He, no doubt, expected the recognition, for he returned the glance with a very expressive look. The fair beauty blushed slightly, and raised her hand to her face, as though she would confine within the front of her hat the silky ringlets, which, however, showed no inclination to stray. At the same moment the gentleman who accompanied her pressed her arm, perhaps involuntarily, and struck his gold-headed cane impatiently upon the ground.

'Is anything the matter, M. de Morsy?' asked the lady, with an air of astonishment.

'I will tell you when your husband has left us,' answered he, and his eyebrows contracted as he spoke.

'Why not before him? I have no secrets from M. Gastoul.'

'I trust it may be so, madame,' said M. de Morsy; but there was a sadness in his tone, which softened the severity of the words.

The man in spectacles walked onwards, with eyes fixed on the ground, and arms crossed behind his back, à la Napoleon. With the real or affected absence of mind of one whose brain is meditating on the fate of nations, and has no thoughts to waste on vulgar objects, he crossed the principal alley at right angles, merely addressing a vague bow to the crowds of both sexes whose progress he interrupted. This laborious passage accomplished, he paused at the edge of the chestnut-trees, and there awaited his companions, who, by mutual consent, cut short their conversation before rejoining him.

'I must now leave you,' said he, as they approached. 'Marquis, I entrust madame to the care of your chivalrous politeness, and delegate all my authority over her to you.'

'You are determined, then, on going to the chamber?' said the young lady, whose eyes wandered inquiringly from her husband to the terrace which runs parallel with the Rue de Rivoli.

'I cannot be off going, ma chère amie,' answered M. Gastoul, with vulgarly conjugal familiarity; 'the sitting of to-day is one of peculiar interest; the reduction of the rentes is to be discussed, and as this is a subject on which I have bestowed some attention, I shall not be sorry to hear how our honourable representatives will acquit themselves in the debate. Besides, M. Barrot is to speak, and it is important that I should be there to compliment him.'

'You are certain then, beforehand, that his speech will contain matter deserving your compliments?' said the marquis, in a satirical tone.

'What do you take me for?' cried the gentleman in spectacles, chuckling as he spoke. 'Do I not know the duties imposed upon me in my capacity of candidate for a seat in the chamber? I have no inclination to miscarry at Limoges, for want of a passport signed by the illustrious leader of the côté gauche.'

'I thought that business was settled.'

'Is any business ever settled with people of that description? For this week past I have been sent backwards and forwards, from pillar to post. My address to the electors was prepared; it wanted nothing but to be properly endorsed, when, at the moment I fancied success certain, an opponent starts up in my path.'

'An opponent?'

'Yes; after having obtained the votes of almost the entire committee, I find myself made a cat's-paw for the advantage of a fellow whose sole merit consists in being the son of a member of the Convention, and in possessing a million of national property.'

'But it seems to me that this gives a man

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some claims,' said the marquis with affected gravity.

'Claims!' interrupted M. Gastoul sharply: 'I will explain to you my adversary's real claims to the protection of the party who have set him up in opposition to me. They are, that he is a dunce, a blockhead, a lump of wax that they can mould into any shape they please; whilst in me they cannot hope to find the same pliancy, the same docility. I have had the imprudence to allow them to take my measure beforehand, and, vanity apart, it seems that I am some inches above their standard height. I am found too independent for a liberal. In the eyes of certain persons this is an unpardonable fault; it may be that their precautions are not quite causeless; let me be but once returned—'

Instead of finishing his phrase, the expectant deputy shot forth from beneath his spectacles one of those imperial glances, the power of which he considered irresistible. 'However, as my election is not yet secured,' continued he contemptuously, 'I must go play my part as parliamentary applauder. Stoop to conquer! This is the first commandment in the political decalogue.'

'Omnia serviliter pro dominatione,' said M. de Morsy, smiling.

'Eh! what, you quote Tacitus? Upon my word, for a marquis of sixteen descents that is not so bad. But the sitting must have commenced, and I shall lose half the debate. Sans adieu!'

Mr. Gastoul kissed the tips of his fingers to the couple whom he left behind, and walked rapidly towards the Pont Tournaut. The marquis and the young wife intrusted to his charge watched his progress for a few moments; they then returned up the broad walk, and proceeded a few steps without a word being spoken on either side. Madame Gastoul was the first to break a silence which was becoming embarrassing to both.

'I am very glad to be alone with you an instant,' she said with a forced smile. 'For several days I have wished to scold you, and the present opportunity is so favourable for my purpose that I cannot allow it to escape.'

'In that case,' answered M. de Morsy, 'commence your lecture at once, for our *tête-à-tête* will not be of long duration.'

'If you fear that we should meet any of my acquaintance in this crowd, we can turn into another walk.'

'Go where we may, there is one person whom we cannot avoid meeting.'

'Who may that person be?' inquired the lady, assuming an air of surprise.

'The gentleman to whom, on entering the gardens, you granted permission to join you in your walk.'

A sudden blush overspread the cheek of Madame Gastoul, and she hesitated for a moment before she replied.

'To whom I granted permission to join me,' she said at length, with an appearance of constraint.

'I shall be only too glad to find myself mistaken,' answered the gentleman of fifty, with something very like a sigh.

'I grant such a permission! I, who have not spoken a syllable to any one but yourself!'

'There is a language in which words are not required.'

'The language des fleurs, perhaps? Are we then in Paris or in Persia? I am really in doubt, when I hear phrases so mysterious and so enigmatical.'

To this sally, pronounced with assumed gaiety, the marquis made no reply, but fixed his eyes on the face of his companion with a glance so penetrating that she looked down in evident confusion.'

'My devotion to you gives me courage even to displease you,' said he at length; 'the truth which another might fear to tell you, you shall hear from me; yes, from me, though it should cost me your friendship.'

M. de Morsy remained silent for a moment, as though he expected an interruption; then seeing that his companion spoke not, and indeed appeared scarcely to listen to him, he continued, and his voice betrayed the agitation which he felt.

'Is it possible that, with your fine tact and keen sense of the ridiculous, you have not already seen through the mask behind which M. d'Epenoy would fain conceal his presumptuous and incurable folly?'

'M. d'Epenoy! is he then the text on which this homily is preached?' interposed Madame Gastoul with a forced smile.

'I intreat you, madame,' again resumed the marquis, 'in consideration of the deep interest I take in your welfare, and above all, for the sake of your self-respect, be candid with me; if otherwise, you will but make a sacrifice of your sincerity without convincing me. It is clear that after having ridiculed, or at least affected to ridicule, the assiduities of M. d'Epenoy, you accept of them very seriously at present.'

'There is one thing which I cannot accept seriously; that is the language you now hold. You have vowed to put me out of temper, but you will not succeed; I feel endowed to-day with the patience of an angel.'

'What you say encourages me to proceed. This, then, since you allow me to speak without reserve, has been the conduct you have pursued with regard to the person in question; you first accepted his attentions as

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a jest, you next endured them as a habit, and you will end by encouraging them in sober earnest.'

'Encourage them, sir!' exclaimed the lady in a tone indicative of anything rather than the angelic state of mind of which she had boasted a moment before.

'If I knew a word more suited to express what I have remarked this morning, be assured, madame, that I should have employed it.'

'To what do you allude? Explain yourself, I intreat. You torture me with your mysterious allusions. What has occurred? for God's sake tell me!'

'Nothing but what happens daily in this place,' answered the marquis, returning the anxious and irritated looks of Madame Gastoul with a smile full of bitterness. 'You desire to come to the Tuileries; on so fine a day, what can be more natural than such a wish? M. d'Epenoy chances to be at the garden-gate the moment you arrive; what more common than such a coincidence? The instant you perceive him, you raise your hand to your forehead; what more simple than such a movement? And if M. d'Epenoy, attributing to that gesture a meaning previously concerted, reads in it a permission to join you in your walk; if, having satisfied himself that your husband has gone to the Palais Bourbon, he were at this moment following us, regulating his pace by ours; if, in a word, we were to meet as we return down the alley, and he were to address you with self-gratulations on the happy chance which made him choose the path in which he finds you;—must not one be very suspicious, very ridiculous, very unjust, to put an unfavourable construction on this coincidence of fortuitous circumstances, or to see premeditation in what is the effect of chance alone?'

Pretty women find their mentors a degree less agreeable than young men do their travelling tutors—that is to say, they cordially detest them. As she listened to the caustic interpretation which construed a meeting so innocent in appearance into a positive assignation, Madame Gastoul internally cursed the sagacity of the grey-beard on whose arm she leaned. At that moment she almost regretted the absence of her husband, whose forte was not penetration, and who could spare neither time nor attention to scrutinize so mercilessly the actions of his wife. However, far from allowing the marquis to perceive her annoyance, she raised her eyes to his face, with a half-conscious, half-angry expression, and, in a voice rendered still more fascinating by a slight tone of vexation, said, 'You treat me very ill—you, whom I thought my friend. And with what unjust severity! To judge by what you say, I must appear unamiable, nay, odious; and yet what is my offence? Is it my fault if M. d'Epenoy chooses to walk to-day in the Tuileries? Moreover, is it quite certain that he is here at all?'

'O madame!' interposed the marquis.

'Well, then, admitting that it is so, can I prevent his going where he chooses?'

'No; but when he comes to join you, you can prevent his engaging you in a long conversation; and this is what I earnestly request of you, for the sake of your own reputation.'

They had reached the end of the walk. Madame Gastoul turned sharply round with an impatient movement, which betrayed the irritation she felt at the admonitions of her guardian.

'Your intentions are excellent, I doubt not,' said she;' 'but I cannot admit that the advice you offer me is either necessary or well-timed. I persist in believing that M. d'Epenoy is not here, or, if he be here, and we meet here, that he will be satisfied with bowing as he passes.'

'We shall see that directly, for here he is.'

Madame Gastoul had no need of this information to perceive, threading the crowd before them, the happy mortal whose attentions she was accused of receiving too favourably. Fulfilling the predictions of the marquis to the letter, M. d'Epenoy approached slowly with an air of perfect unconsciousness. The nonchalance with which he glanced from side to side announced nothing of the impatient eagerness of a lover. They were already within a few paces of each other, and he seemed on the point of passing Madame Gastoul without recognition, when suddenly, without the slightest appearance of premeditation, his eye turned in the direction which brought her within his scope of vision. His features, far from expressing the emotion inseparable, it is said, from true passion, exhibited an expression of quiet pleasure not unmixed with surprise. He took off his hat, and approached the lady with an ease as full of respect as it was free from formality.

'This is indeed a happy chance, madame,' said M. d'Epenoy, with his sweetest smile.

He could not have commenced the conversation in a manner less likely to make a favourable impression. The ironical prediction of the marquis made the trivial phrase appear ridiculous in the extreme. Vexed at the awkwardness of the man who aspired to her favour, Madame Gastoul replied only by a look of dissatisfaction, whilst M. de Morsy was at no pains to conceal his merriment.

M. d'Epenoy looked in surprise from one

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to the other, but instead of being disconcerted, as a man less assured of his own importance might have been, he bowed familiarly to the marquis, and bending again towards the lady, 'If I thank my good fortune,' he said, giving a graceful turn to his original phrase, 'it is, because, in addition to the pleasure which the sight of you always affords, it frees me today from a load of anxiety. You were taken suddenly ill yesterday evening at the Hôtel Castellane. The mob that crowded the apartments prevented my approach, and when I learned that you had returned home, I feared that you might be severely unwell.'

''Twas very nearly so, in consequence of the mortification that foolish accident caused me,' replied Madame Gastoul. 'I hold fainting fits in abhorrence, for I know how few people are charitable enough to believe them genuine. However, I assure you that mine was not a scene got up to make myself interesting, and that the heat of the room in which I was, alone occasioned it.'

Whilst Madame Gastoul was speaking, M. d'Epenoy had placed himself by her side with the intention of inducing her to continue a walk, in which he hoped to accompany her. M. de Morsy remarked the manœuvre, but instead of insuring its success by moving forwards, he leant heavily on his cane, and remained as immovable as a ship riding at anchor.

Madame Gastoul, whether from reserve, prudence, or timidity, did not venture to take the initiative which the gesture of her lover hinted at. Furious with the marquis, whose hostile penetration had more than once seen through and baffled his designs, almost equally enraged with the object of his passion, who, far from coming to his assistance, seemed to desire his absence, M. d'Epenoy resolved not to allow himself to be dismissed like a raw school-boy. With an attitude of quiet decision, his countenance irradiated with an imperturbable smile, he courageously renewed the conversation.

'I trust, madame,' said he, 'that your indisposition has entirely left you, and that you will not be prevented from going to Madame Devesne's ball this evening.'

'I have danced rather too much lately,' answered Madame Gastoul, 'and my physician has imposed some little restraint upon me; but, as a transition from a ball every night to absolute repose would be rather too sudden, he has given me permission to go to the theatre. I am allowed to be my own mistress until eleven o'clock, but no longer. On this point the doctor is inexorable.'

'You will, then, be at the theatre this evening?' resumed the gentleman, in a lower tone.

'Probably; I have not yet seen Chatterton.'

These words, uttered in an accent of the most perfect indifference, were accompanied by a rapid glance, in which any man with the slightest tact might have read this clear injunction—'You know where to find me this evening—now leave me.'

M. d'Epenoy knew that there was no appeal from an order so plain and so little discouraging. Satisfied with the information he had gained, he took leave of Madame Gastoul, and departed, bowing to the gentleman of fifty winters with that air of banter which lovers, in the flush of their success, willingly adopt to mock at ill-timed and impertinent curiosity, envy, jealousy, and all the other amiable passions with which the atmosphere of gallantry abounds.

Madame Gastoul and the marquis continued their walk in silence for some time after M. d' Epenoy had left them. The lady, in her turn, seemed determined not to be the first to speak. This silence, which M. de Morsy attributed to a feeling of sadness at the departure of the object of her love, redoubled his chagrin, and he at last broke it with a painful attempt to appear gay.

'I trust, madame,' said he, 'that you will not refuse to me the favour which you have just granted to M. d' Epenoy, and that you will permit me also to pay a visit this evening in your box at the Français?'

'Why, this is better and better,' cried Madame Gastoul, who could no longer conceal her vexation. 'A moment ago I was only accused of allowing M. d' Epenoy to speak to me in a public promenade—now I am found guilty of going to the theatre for the purpose of meeting him. Henceforth I shall not dare to open my lips or to move a finger in your presence. I cannot raise my hand to arrange my hair, but you see in it a telegraphic signal; I cannot utter the most commonplace phrase, but you construe it into a rendezvous that I grant. Allow me to tell you, M. de Morsy, that you carry your spirit of interpretation a little too far. Upon my word, you should have been in Spain in the days of the auto-da-fé;—with your exquisite talent for giving a criminal colouring to the most indifferent actions, you would have made an admirable inquisitor.'

'Madame,' replied the marquis, apparently unmoved by her sarcasms, 'when I resolved to speak frankly to you, I resigned myself to the endurance of your anger. I must fulfil my task, even at the risk of increasing your displeasure. It is a duty I owe to friendship, to enlighten that inexperience which alone blinds you to the dangers of your position. Had you lived longer in the world, you

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would not need my counsels, but, young and inexperienced as you are, do not, I beseech you, turn a deaf ear to them. Forgive me if I repeat, that the encouragement you give to the attentions of M. d' Epenoy is more than imprudent—it is dangerous.'

'The perils of which you speak can have no existence for a virtuous woman,' said Madame Gastoul proudly.

'Ah! madame, this is not a question of virtue, but of reputation. It is unnecessary to remind me of the respect I owe you—would that every one who knows you were equally alive to it! I tremble to think that the slightest equivocal appearance may compromise it. Society, as you well know, cares only for appearances. Indulgent to vice, it is without pity for imprudence. In the eyes of the world, innocence is of little importance—reputation is everything.'

'Would you give me to understand that mine is tarnished?'

'Is it not enough that it should be endangered?'

'And why? Because, living in the same society with M. d' Epenoy, I occasionally meet him at the houses of our mutual friends?'

'Rather because, meeting M. d' Epenoy, not occasionally, but constantly, night after night, from month's end to month's end, you have, by degrees, allowed him to assume towards you that sort of intimacy, the entire innocence of which the world never admits.'

'Do not speak to me of the world—it is detestable.'

'It often is so, I allow; but, just or unjust, it is your judge, and from its decision there is no appeal. A man may brave its decrees—a woman's part is to submit.'

Madame Gastoul silently acquiesced in the truth of this opinion; she hung down her head, and made no answer.

'I may possibly have spoken with too much severity,' resumed M. de Morsy, in an agitated tone. 'To you, conscious of your own innocence, my alarms may appear unreasonable—unjust; if so, remember that a friendship such as mine deserves some indulgence, and forgive me.'

The young lady raised her head, and meeting the eyes of the marquis fixed upon her with an expression of tenderness which simple friendship does not usually display, she said, with a smile of doubtful meaning,

'I will forgive you, but on two conditions;—first, that you will torment me no more about M. d' Epenoy, whose agreeable manners will never trouble my peace of mind—who, in short, does not in any way justify your apprehensions; secondly—'

'Secondly?' repeated M. de Morsy, looking at her attentively.

'Secondly,' continued Madame Gastoul, with an air of decision very different from her previous hesitation—'that you will have the goodness to allow me to spend the remainder of the spring in Paris, according to my original intention.'

'On what motives could I ground any interference with your arrangements, or what power have I to interfere, even if I wished it?' inquired the marquis, whose anxious brow was again overclouded.

'On what motives? Surely, after your late remonstrances, you do not ask the question seriously. And for your power, you have but to use, or rather abuse, the influence you possess over M. Gastoul, to persuade him to transport the head-quarters of his electioneering operations to Limoges.'

'Your husband has spoken to you on this subject then?'

'I am happy to tell you that M. Gastoul does repose some confidence in me.'

'It is well,' retorted the marquis, evidently annoyed. 'And allowing that I did recommend him to return, for two or three months, to the department in which his property lies, and which he aspires to represent, can you deny that my advice is prudent and reasonable? The deputy whom he hopes to replace is given over by his physicians, and, even if he live, his resignation is beyond a doubt—it may be communicated to the Chamber at any moment. If your husband wishes to secure his election, he must take measures to augment the number of his supporters. For this purpose, my opinion is that he ought rather to be at Limoges than in Paris. I may be mistaken, but my intentions are good, and I am not aware that they require any apology.'

By one of those ready manœuvres which women bring into play with so much tact, and generally with such complete success, the grounds of the discussion had been shifted. From being the attacking party, M. de Morsy found himself reduced to act on the defensive, and here, as is usually the case with men, he acquitted himself very ill. Madame Gastoul took care not to compromise the advantage she had gained by neglecting to follow it up.

'Whom do you expect to convince that you take serious interest in M. Gastoul's success?' asked she with an incredulous smile. 'The little interest you take in politics is too well known. What care you whether the côté droit or the côté gauche lose or gain a vote? No, no; your anxiety is not to send M. Gastoul to Limoges, to canvass his constituents, but to drive me out of Paris. Allow me to inquire your object in so doing?'

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'It is for your own sake, madame, for the sake of your reputation,' answered the marquis, in a tone of deep feeling.

'And what right have you to busy yourself with my reputation?' retorted the young lady, growing more and more animated. 'A husband, a father, a brother even, may claim a right to watch over and direct a woman's conduct; but in you I can recognize no such right, and your guardianship is an usurpation to which I am resolved not to submit.'

'Would you, then, deprive friendship of its dearest privilege?'

'Friendship!—poor friendship! for how many failings is it made answerable! But let us mutually understand the meaning of this word. Friendship, in my sense of the term, is gentle, obliging, discreet, charitable; in yours it is suspicious, moody, intolerant, fault-finding. Jealousy, injustice, nay, ill-breeding, may be borne with in love, but they are incompatible with my idea of friendship.'

Madame Gastoul accompanied these words with a glance so searching, that M. de Morsy, with a bashfulness little seen in persons of his age, was fain to turn away to avoid encountering it.

'You are right,' said he at length, in evident embarrassment, 'we do not understand each other. You will not allow friendship to be anything more than habitual companionship, whilst I feel that it may become a passion.'

'In that case I pity it!' exclaimed the young lady quickly. 'In becoming a passion, it has everything to lose, and nothing to gain. I would advise friendship always to keep within its proper sphere of moderation and calmness. But,' continued she, in a far gentler tone, 'this dissertation is carrying us away from our subject. Let us return to it, if you please. Stripped of all the romantic circumstances with which your imagination would invest it, the case stands thus:—a poor young woman, educated in a convent, and buried from the moment of her marriage in the wilds and mountains of the Limousin, falls desperately in love with Paris, to whose delights, although it is her native place, she has hitherto been a stranger. Is there anything strange in this? Is it not the history of my life, and the life of every girl educated as I have been? Six months of freedom in Paris! Am I not right to prolong so pleasant a dream to the latest possible moment? Think of me as you choose. I am resolved not to forego a single day that my husband has promised me. These six months are my holidays, and I will enjoy them to the last hour. And after all, what great harm am I doing? Is it an unpardonable weakness, at two-and-twenty, to love dancing, music, the theatre, society—in a word, to enjoy myself? Is it a crime of very deep dye to wander, like a bee, from shrub to flower, culling agreeable recollections to enliven my poor hive, where all is so dull and lonely? M. Gastoul is the first to feel all this, and to encourage me to amuse myself—why should you blame what he approves?'

'Because a friend's eyes see more clearly than a husband's.'

'Because you are as unkind as he is indulgent. Yes, you must, indeed, be hard-hearted, thus to grudge the fresh air and sunshine to a prisoner—for our chateau, as you well know, is little better than a prison. Come now, my good M. de Morsy,' continued she, in a coaxing tone, 'will you try to make yourself agreeable? Do you wish me to believe in your friendship, and to give you mine in return?'

'What would you have me do?' asked the marquis.

'First smile, instead of looking as grave as a displeased chaperon,' answered Madame Gastoul, smiling herself with irresistible sweetness, 'and then have some compassion for a poor girl, who delights in dancing, and would be in despair at leaving a ball before the cotillion. You do not know that I have just got three most becoming new dresses. To keep them for the Limousin would be sacrilege; even you must allow that. I am sure you will admire them, and you know how much I value your taste. You see now that it would be cruel to disappoint me—you have not the heart to do so; promise me not to renew your advice to M. Gastoul to return to Limoges; nay, more than this, you must promise me that, if he speaks to you again on the subject, you will employ all your influence to dissuade him from so odious a plan. This will be the easiest thing in the world, for nothing can exceed his deference for your opinion. You will do what I ask, will you not? Now, promise me that you will.'

It required far more insensibility than the tender heart of M. de Morsy could boast, to resist the tone, the looks, the persuasive smiles, with which this request was urged. Nevertheless, far from yielding, he shook his head in token of refusal.

'Your words confirm all my fears on your behalf,' said he sorrowfully. 'Paris has its claims, no doubt; but all its pleasures are as nothing in comparison with one absorbing attraction. Do not deny it. I see it but too clearly. However blind your husband may be, it is not my business to open his eyes, but I cannot and will not assist you in deceiving him.'

During the conversation Madame Gastoul had occasion more than once to summon to

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her aid those twin virtues, patience and prudence, which are so indispensably necessary to a woman who is inclined to stray from the right path. In humbling herself to entreat where she was accustomed to command, in lavishing her utmost graciousness on a man who claimed a right to censure her conduct —a right always odious, even where it is legitimate, but doubly revolting where it is usurped and unauthorized—she had great difficulty in restraining her natural warmth of temper, and imposing silence on her pride. Already weary of the part she played, she was offended beyond measure at the severe terms in which the marquis concluded. Her eyes shot fire, and the meaning smile which curled her lip seemed the forerunner of one of those cutting replies, for which women, when urged beyond their patience, are never at a loss. By a violent effort Madame Gastoul repressed the sally which was about to burst from her, and, with features composed and brow smooth as a marble statue, quietly said, 'I have some visits to pay before dinner; will you be good enough to take me to the carriage?'

The advice of the marquis had been too ill received to encourage him to prolong the conversation, although he did not despair of renewing it with success at a more propitious moment. He bowed his head to signify his obedience to her orders, and turned at once in the direction of the gate. As they crossed the gardens, not a word was spoken on either side, and when they reached the carriage, Madame Gastoul quitted the arm of the marquis and got into it, with all the eagerness of a child escaping from the grasp of his pedagogue. This movement brought a half smile to the lips of M. de Morsy, and before the door was shut he leant over towards Madame Gastoul, and said in a low tone,

'Do you quite hate me?'

'Why will you not do what I desire?' replied she discontentedly.

'What you desire! you know too well that it is impossible.'

'I know one thing, and you ought to know it also, namely, that I cannot bear to be contradicted; and since you pretend to be my friend, I think you might treat me with a little more indulgence; for even if I am sometimes capricious and thoughtless, that is no reason ——'

Madame Gastoul paused and hesitated, as though her attention were distracted, and the thread of her ideas broken. The marquis remarked, too, that whilst she spoke to him she was looking in another direction; and turning his head he at once perceived M. d'Epenoy, who had taken up his old position behind the gate. With a cold bow to the lady, he walked quickly back into the gardens. Far from avoiding the encounter, M. d'Epenoy, his countenance radiant with smiles, advanced at once to meet him.

'I was looking for you,' he said, in a tone of easy familiarity; 'I have a message, which I forgot to deliver to you just now.'

'A message?' said the marquis, striving to appear calm.

'Yes. My mother wishes to see you at your earliest convenience. I suppose it is about some matrimonial negotiation, in which your assistance is wanted. You know that she makes a dozen matches a year, on an average. I wonder M. de Foy does not bring an action against her for invasion of privilege. She is the providence of inconsolable widows and despairing old maids; and when she has not arranged a first interview, superintended the purchase of a *corbeille*, or discussed the preliminaries of a marriage settlement, she feels, like Titus, that she has lost a day. She would have written to you, but as she knows that a day seldom passes without our meeting, she allowed me to be the bearer of her request. If you have time to go to her to-day, you will be sure to find her at home.'

'I will go at once,' said M. de Morsy absently.

As he spoke, Madame Gastoul's carriage drove away. The two gentlemen watched it until it was out of sight, when M. d'Epenoy resumed the conversation with an air of raillery.

'Upon my word, M. le Marquis,' said he, 'you have a great deal to answer for in the jealous feelings to which you give rise. I know that many a man, myself amongst the number, envied the office you held just now. But, if I may judge by the cold reception you give me, any one who wished to share it with you would meet with no encouragement on your part. Not that I mean this as a reproach. I am perfectly conscious that if I had the distinguished honour of being the *cavalier* of so charming a person as Madame Gastoul, any rival would have but little politeness to expect at my hands. But, alas! my good manners are not likely to be put to so trying a proof; such a triumph can never fall to my lot.'

The implied sarcasm of M. d'Epenoy was not calculated to allay the irritable feelings of the marquis. He was about to answer with an intemperance little suitable to his time of life, when the dialogue was unceremoniously cut short by the arrival of a third person: it was M. Gastoul.

'Well! what has become of my wife?' asked he, surprised at her disappearance.

'Madame Gastoul had some visits to pay,'

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replied M. de Morsy: 'I have just left her. So you did not remain at the chamber until the end of the sitting?'

'Ma foi! I soon had enough of it! Phrases, phrases, nothing but phrases! No ideas, no logic, no arrangement! *Bon jour*, M. d'Epenoy, you are quite well, I hope.'

'Perfectly, I thank you;' replied the young man, who had not waited for the question to bow with all possible politeness to the husband of the woman to whose favours he aspired.

'The simplest elements of the subject disregarded, or misunderstood,' continued the candidate for Limoges, criticising his future colleagues without mercy. 'And they call this discussion! Moreover, marquis, I did not see my man, who is, they tell me, with the king. So that my affair is again delayed.'

'Messieurs,' said M. d'Epenoy, 'I see you have business to talk over; I will no longer be a restraint upon you.'

'Wait a moment; I had something to say to you,' replied M. Gastoul, seizing him by the button as he was moving away. 'O!—yes!—If you have nothing better to do this evening, come to the Français; we can have a chat there. Madame Gastoul has taken a box, and we shall have room for you. You will find us in No. 22, on the first tier.'

At this matrimonial trait, M. de Morsy clasped his hands, and cast up his eyes to heaven.

'I shall not forget,' said M. d'Epenoy, as laughing in his sleeve he left them.

'What is the matter?' inquired M. Gastoul of the marquis. 'Are you in pain? you are as pale as death.'

M. de Morsy was indeed pale—pale with agitation and wrath. Disappointed in Madame Gastoul, enraged with young d'Epenoy, his indignation was beyond control at the characteristic blundering and conjugal blindness of the man in spectacles. He was on the point of throwing away his cane, after the example of Louis XIV., lest he might be tempted to use it; a proceeding, which would have been as inexcusable in a bachelor to a married man, as in a king to a nobleman. Resisting this strange inclination, the marquis, who felt his patience quite exhausted, prudently resolved to expose it to no further trials.

'Adieu!' said he quietly; 'I too, have some visits to pay.'

With these words, he rushed out of the gardens, paying no attention to the remonstrances of M. Gastoul, whom he left not a little surprised at his precipitate departure.

(To be continued.)

STANZAS.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

What! pray for her no more—the loved, the lost!
When stood she so in need of pray'rs as now?
On the wild sea of stormy passion tost,
With lightning flashing shame around her brow?
When innocent, my pray'rs avail'd her not,
But now in them she must not be forgot!

Tell me no more of injury and pride,
Wake not the evil spirits of my heart,
I know to feel, and know I must abide
The bitter agony of its dread smart;
Still is her name so wonted to my pray'r,
It seems to have a birthright to be there!

That heart is like a channel, for my tears
Have fretted at its core, wasting away
The flow'rs that blossom'd on its banks for years,
Hope's flow'rs, and love's, brief, beautiful, and gay—
And now, alas! it only doth retain
The thorn that rankles ever there to pain.

O, how I mind me of her form of light,
(Though darken'd o'er by crime and sorrow now,)
Shining resplendent as a vision bright,
That steals from heav'n to kiss the poet's brow;
There was it set in blessings, like a gem
Polish'd to grace a seraph's diadem.

And there, though trampled on, detested, spurn'd—
It still will shine, but with a fainter ray,
As lamps that are by pious love inurn'd,
Shed a dimm'd radiance round the mould'ring clay,
Yet, all so veil'd, it will be the sole light,
That ever breaks the gloom of that heart's night.

THE CLAIRON EMEUTE; OR, THE FRENCH STAGE IN 1765.

BY EDWARD HOWARD, AUTHOR OF 'RATTLIN THE REEFER,' &c.

At the time of which we are about to speak, men's minds had already become agitated by truths ill understood, and a deep sense of injuries for which they could as yet perceive no remedy; and thus a dreary hopelessness begat wild longings for revenge,

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combined with a savage recklessness of despair. France was on the eve of her dreadful revolution, beggared in her finances, oppressed by a contemptible and effeminate nobility, and nourishing in her own bosom the brood of half-tigers, half-vipers, which were shortly to deluge her capital with blood, and stain her memory with a continuation of crimes horrible even to record.

It was, however, the era of great men—men who brought to their species resplendent and new lights, derived both from heaven and from hell; but this alternation came too suddenly upon the masses—it first dazzled, and then drove them mad. The court, the deluded court, still persisted in its full career of vanity and tyranny, each making the other more absurd and more insupportable. The stage, that is, and always will be, not the director of the morals of the age, but merely the reflex of them, will show more plainly than any dissertation, however eloquent, that the social compact in France was ripe for dissolution, and that the gilded rottenness of the throne would soon give way, and its unhappy and weak occupant be crushed in its ruins.

But let us drop this rather too serious strain, and treat that which, though indicative of the most serious disasters, was eminently ridiculous in itself, in as light a manner as the reflections that must intrude themselves on this subject will permit of. In the April of 1765, the Parisian community were enraptured with a claptrap tragedy, called 'The Siege of Calais.' It was founded on the well-known incident of our conqueror Edward having resolved to wreak his vengeance upon some of the best men of that obstinately-defended town, for their pertinacity in delaying him so long in its capture. Of course, in this drama, everything that was French in it was thrice glorified, and Paris vanity was fooled up to 'the top of its bent,' if anybody ever yet could calculate the sublimity of its exaltation. After a cessation of theatricals for the space of three weeks during Lent, all Paris was on the point of rushing again to immortalize, by endeavouring to identify themselves with, the heroism of the heroes of Calais, when lo! the Destinies—for nothing less could stop by their interference the Gallic passion for egotism and amusement—forbade.

The intrepid Alienor, the generous Eustache, and the victorious Edward, had replenished their wardrobes, retrimmed their beards, and recovered their breath, and were 'eager for the fray,' again and again to prosecute the siege of that devoted town, lately so often lost and won. Well sustained by the folly and the inexhaustible patience of the nation, they had furnished themselves with new ardour—indeed their boldness was all but sublime. Every preparation was made, and never did the attack promise greater vigour, and the defence a more glorious and obstinate resistance. But the Destinies, as we before stated, from a cloud of minute circumstances, thundered forth the irrevocable fiat, 'RAISE THE SIEGE!'

How is it that we never could correctly remember a quotation? In what part of the brain does the organ of quotationativeness reside? Will the phrenologists turn their attention to this subject and explain—if they can? We think, judging by what they have already achieved, that they cannot. For ourselves, we have the bump of acquisitiveness most monstrously developed, and yet we are poorer than an author righteously should be—how poor that is, let the prisons and the cross-roads determine. This is wandering a long way from Calais;—not at all. We are only searching for our quotation, in order to break up its siege and disperse the besiegers. Let us try at a hazard—

'What great events from little causes spring!'

There is not much in it, after all; but, as Pope wrote it, nobody doubts it—and that is quite enough for the millions. Well, the little cause that produced the great events which we are about to record was, that Mr. Dubois took one evening, very unluckily too late, a walk in the Palais Royal, and there caught an alarming cold. Mr. Dubois had been hououred for nine-and-twenty years with the confidence of all the tragic heroes that ever stilted themselves along the highways of humanity. He was all but born an Agamemnon, nurtured a Hippolytus, and fairly educated with Mahomet. From his infancy had been confided to him the thrice honourable charge of astonishing the pit with those beautiful and interminable actions which make French tragedy so probable and so very natural;—and yet, at times, he would condescend to fill the part of a simple footman, but, of course, with the air of a demi-god. He was a man of versatility, and, though devoted to Melpomene, would now and then condescend to flirt with Thalia—and with equal success.

In the memorable 'SIEGE OF CALAIS,' Mister Dubois enacted the personage of that generous Manny, so lachrymose on the fate of the six self-devoted sacrifices. Mr. Dubois could weep like a leaky cask. But the private life of our Protean friend was, we are sorry to record, not regulated by those severe principles which so much distinguished the English general whom he so movingly personified. But let us confess that our friend is not the only great character whose public and

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private life show a little discrepancy. The great actors on the world's stage, as well as at the Theatre Royal, have too often stumbled at this point. The noble Dubois, so pathetic, so compassionate, so patriotic, moral, and inflexibly virtuous *on* the boards, proved himself, when *off*, a keen hand, and the least in the world a knave—nothing certainly to make a fuss about.

The clever Dubois fell ill. Illness is the common lot, and the lot, more especially, of those who will promenade, in the evenings, in the Palais Royal. The representatives of kings, when ill, must, no less than the kings themselves, get cured; and so, with as little of royal pomp as could be imagined, he applied himself to a dapper barber-surgeon. The cares and the skill of the tonsorial Galen were responsive to the wishes and the anxieties of the Parisian world; yet the ungrateful Dubois responded not to the wishes and anxieties of the little surgeon; for the actor's memory, being overburthened with parts to please the public, was totally oblivious to his private affairs. The bills of the play played the deuce with his other bills;—he first forgot to pay the doctor's, and he finished by suddenly remembering that he had paid it long ago.

The surgeon, with a much better memory —we will not mention principles—could not succeed in persuading our gentleman that he had cured him, so he cited him before the judge. The magnificent Dubois, too much occupied with some of the roguish parts he had played on the stage, forgot himself, and endeavoured to enact one of them on the floor of the court, and, with a good deal of dramatic effect, offered to take his oath that he had already once paid the demand. A scamp of the name of Blainville, his boon companion, and a detestable actor both on and off the stage, very willingly swore to the payment of that bill which he piously wished his friend had really paid.

But the little lancet-wielder's lawyer, seeing that he had two oath-swallowers of enormous gullets to deal with, determined to play with them at a game in which they were certain to be checkmated. He drew up a process, and had it printed, in favour of his client, in which he stated, that neither the oath of the veritable Mr. Dubois, nor that of the more than veritable Mr. Blainville, could be received in any court of justice, seeing that they were excommunicate, and in the full exercise of an infamous profession—all the which was legally and theologically true. In this respect, how far superior are our own actors and actresses! The law recognizes them *only* as vagabonds;—truly they have much to be thankful for!

This, of course, in so excitable a community as that of Paris, raised a tolerable commotion. Of course, the whole tribe of comedians took up the cause of their undeserving brethren—not upon their merits, for that would have been building on something extremely subtle and visionary—but on the merits of the question generally. Never had a better opportunity offered itself for doing away with those execrable prejudices and most unjust laws as respected their class—prejudices and laws as shameful to an enlightened nation, as they were humiliating to what *might* be a very deserving portion of the social community.

But facts are dreadfully impregnable. On a proper investigation by the players, it was soon discovered that the Messieurs Dubois and Blainville were exactly nothing better than a pair of incontestable blackguards. It was, therefore, necessary for the good of the theatrical cause, to disconnect themselves from these two littlegoods. Their company paid the surgeon's bill and law-costs, and, after having consulted with and obtained the approbation of the principal officers of his majesty's household, they thought themselves quite safe in striking out the names of our two hard swearers from the list of the royal comedians in ordinary—an appellation answering to that of his majesty's servants with ourselves.

After this, it was thought that the 'Siege of Calais' would have gone on admirably, and proved equally beneficial to the conquerors and the conquered. No such thing. The Destinies—O those Destinies!—again interfered. The part of Manny the illustrious was given to Mr. Bellecour, in the room of the illustrious Dubois. The announcement was spread all over Paris, the playbills confirmed it—but those Destinies again—they had postponed this longed-for representation, and inscribed the sentence on their book of brass, until exactly the day after the commencement of eternity.

The wretchedness of the renowned Dubois had touched the pious heart of his daughter, an actor of the *Comédie Française*, and, after Miss Clairon, the very frail but only hope of the public. The amiable young lady, animated by that august piety which is sure to precipitate its possessor into the lap of heroism, undertook to save her father, let it cost her what it would; and it is certain that this her filial tenderness obliged her to put no bounds to other tendernesses, if not so filial, almost as pleasant. Armed with the natural powers of her charms, made still more irresistible by her cause and her misfortune, she set out, in a state of enviable resignation, to meet her fate. It would have

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been a noble, had it been a first sacrifice—*mais passons tout cela.* She was one of those sensible young ladies who know how to make a sacrifice a pleasure.

The two principal officers of his majesty's household could not see so much despair unconcerned. They respected the daughter's grief, and participated in her feelings. In an instant the aspect of affairs is changed. The two first gentlemen immediately ordered the magniloquent Dubois to be reinstated on the list of his majesty's servants, and that very morn they sent an order to the playhouse that the 'SIEGE OF CALAIS' should be represented that very evening, and the identical Dubois should resume, at the same time, his character of the sentimental Manny.

At this unexpected turn the petrified actors played their parts for once very naturally, stared wildly at each other, and then proceeded to discuss the difficulties into which the filial piety of Ma'amselle Dubois had involved them. They were in the first instance magnanimous enough. Not one, no, not even a shifter of the scenes, would adulterate their immaculate characters by playing with a scoundrel whom they had ignominiously expelled from the company by an unanimous decision. Their characters! It sounded exceedingly well. The super-exalted Ma'amselle Clairon, for whom it was a glory to run mad, and worth an immortality to ruin one's self, suddenly found herself taken violently ill, and very heroically went to bed. The Kean of the day vanished, Molé evaporated. No more of King Edward—no more of Harcourt—Eustache Brisarde, the courageous Eustache, made a solemn declaration, swearing by this and by that, that nothing should ever compel him to be found within the walls of Calais alongside of a rogue. The siege was again and effectually raised. *Vivent Messieurs et Mesdames les Comédiens!*

However, the hour of representation approaches. The public have assembled. The partisans of the beautiful Dubois are pleading her cause in the pit and the corridors. She herself, with her luxuriant hair all dishevelled, the picture of distressed eloquence, suppliant, moves from box to box, endeavouring to move all hearts in the favour of an unfortunate father, the victim of the excessive and squeamish delicacy of his associates. The curtain draws up. The timid and gooselike Bovet, with his white gloves in his hand, and his whiter complexion struggling with his extravagant rouge, creeps tremblingly forward, and stammers out this address—'Ladies and gentlemen, we are in despair at not being able to give you the "SIEGE——"

'No despair!' bellows the pit. 'The SIEGE OF CALAIS and *Dubois!*'

This terrible shout resounds throughout the house, extending itself to the orchestra, shaking the powder out of the fiddlers' wigs, penetrates through the boxes, echoes along the avenues, and fairly reaches the portico, where it is taken up by one-half of the blackguards of the city, and immediately spread through Paris by the other.

The guard makes believe, as the little children say, to quiet the house, but are obliged to confine their efforts to example, and to keep themselves very quiet indeed, in a wholesome fear of greater misfortunes. Preville, the incomparable Preville, made his smiling appearance in order to commence the comedy of the 'Gamester,' that had been substituted for the tragedy of this famous 'SIEGE OF CALAIS.' He is beaten back by a hurricane of hisses, and obliged to scud for it before the wind, and disappear.

'The insolent mountebanks! To prison with them! Insolent apes! To the hospital with Clairon! To prison with these sticks! Begone, rascals, vagabonds!'

This frenzy lasted just seven hours, and produced some hundreds of sore throats. The enlightened public would hear nothing but their own 'most sweet voices,' and at last could hardly hear these. The curtain falls, the money is returned at the doors, the flame spreads, and in an instant all Paris condemns the actors without mercy, and without at all understanding the merits of the question. The O. P. row in this our beloved and most sensible country was not managed better.

Charming public! all amiable art thou in thy judgments! What happiness to serve thee! Thou, who so well knowest how to forget, in a moment, all past services, and who delightest suddenly to outrage and insult all that thou hast been blindly and enthusiastically applauding uninterruptedly for twenty years! Thou wilt be a great gainer, doubtlessly, to degrade and vilify those talents which have contributed to thine amusement and thy glory. With this noble gratitude there will be never wanting to you great talents, great writers, and great geniuses. Charming public! all amiable art thou in thy judgments!

This apostrophe is meant for the present and the future public, as I fear that of 1765 is a little too late to benefit by it. If they, the present public, feel the force of this appeal, let it commence its reformation by requiring another edition of all our works. There is a great deal of room for their generosity.

We must now record the effects of this commotion. The worthy and honest Eu-

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stache Brisarde, and the exalted Count de Mahun, who condescended to be vulgarly known as Mr. Dauberval, and who had likewise refused to play with the illustrious Dubois, were arrested and thrown into durance vile in the prison of Fort l'Evêque.

The theatre remained closed all the next day, and the famous Miss Clairon, although confined to her bed by real or suppositious indisposition, was taken thence and also imprisoned in this same Fort l'Evêque. The government was strong, the public was strong, and the players weak. Can we then be surprised at these strong measures?

Thus the principal characters of the 'SIEGE OF CALAIS,' being themselves obliged to sustain a blockade within stone walls, on the 17th, the day after the carrying away captive, at two in the afternoon the Comédie of the '*Chevalier à la mode*' was posted on the doors of the theatre. The greatest precautions had been taken to preserve peace in the house. All parts of the building were filled with detachments of the police, sentinels, and patrols of soldiers. The lieutenant-general of the *gens-d'armes* was there in person. Indeed, as the officials made the principal part of the audience, to have procured a disturbance they must themselves have made it.

When the curtain drew up to this very complaisant house, the affrighted Bellecour, with panic on his features and humility in his looks, in the name of the company humbly craved pardon of the public for having failed in respect towards it. This apology was drawn up by orders from the highest quarter, and which the public had the generosity most vehemently to applaud. For the benefit of our present and future managers, we shall give this apology as nearly verbatim as the genius of the two languages will admit of. It is an admirable specimen of the climax of baseness.

'Most indulgent ladies and gentlemen,

'Penetrated by the intensest grief, and humbled by the deepest contrition, we once more presume to present ourselves before you. We deplore with the greatest bitterness our misfortune in having offended you. Our souls cannot be more affected than they are at the real and inexcusable wrong which we have done you. There is no conceivable apology which we do not owe you. We wait with the humblest submission for the punishment which you may be pleased to award us, and the punishment that has already been imposed upon our companions, we confess is much less than they or we deserve. Our repentance is sincere, and that which increases our sorrow is the being obliged to lock up, in the recesses of our hearts, the sentiments of zeal, of attachment, and of profound respect which we entertain for you, and the sincerity of which you have a right to suspect at the present moment. Time only can prove the reality of all that we profess. By our labours and by our efforts, which henceforth we will make to contribute to your amusement, we hope to efface from your memory all traces of our deep offence; and it is from the kindness and indulgence with which you have so long honoured us, that we wait for the pardon for which we dare not supplicate you to grant us.'

During the triumph of that monster with more heads than brains, the august public, the plays were miserably performed, owing to the incarceration of all the best actors and actresses. It is very true, that a triumph always costs something. Among these victims to the support of honour, honesty, and decency, was, as we have before stated, the incomparable Mademoiselle Clairon, the French Siddons of their stage, not certainly her equal there, and, we are very sorry to observe, very, very far her inferior in private virtue. But she was a high-spirited and a glorious woman notwithstanding, and, in her professional character, *la belle France* has just cause to be proud of *la belle Clairon.*

Whilst this distinguished lady languished within the walls of Fort l'Evêque, we will take the opportunity of saying a few words concerning her, which may not be unacceptable to the English reader. She was certainly great only on the stage. Her admirers had flattered her into littleness—they had made her insolent, jealous of all rivalry, and intolerably overbearing. Even our own dear, never-to-be-forgotten Garrick had a good deal assisted to spoil her. In common with every man of taste, he paid her her just tribute as a tragic actress; and, it was rumoured, was not a little captivated with her personal charms. The latter, Garrick denied to Diderot, and maintained that he had only been respectfully gallant to the advances of a seductive lady. Let this avowal stand for as much as it is worth, and it was not worth a great deal, as Mrs. Garrick certainly was jealous of the gifted comedian, for whom he designed the face of a model which represented Mademoiselle Clairon in the act of being crowned by Melpomene, and on the opposite side was this inscription—

'J'ai prédit que Clairon illustrait la scène,
Et mon espoir n'a point été déçu;
Elle a couronnée Melpomène,
Melpomène lui rend ce qu'elle en a reçu.'

The which, for the edification of those who have learned French at suburban schools, may thus be translated:

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'I Clairon foresaw the stage would tread,
Its glory; and my hopes have not proved vain;
She placed a crown upon Melpomene's head,
Which the just goddess gave to her again.'

The judicious reader will perceive that the design for the medallion, the quatrain, and the translation, are all common-place and contemptible; but we thank that particular Muse whom we are in the habit of invoking, that only one-third of this bêtise can be fairly attributed to us, and it is something to row in the same boat with Garrick, although in this case it happens to be a rather shabby one.

The quiet hauteur with which she received the homage of her adorers, her overbearing assumption of superiority, and her greediness of public applause, were continually fed by offerings as foolish as that which we have just narrated. The Count Vabelle, her titular friend and her devoted admirer, in a medallion which he had struck off in her honour, outdid Garrick in platitude. On one side was the bust of the heroine, and on the other this little bit of prosy prose—'*Melpomene and Friendship have engraved this medallion.*'

We will give a single anecdote of this all but worshipped lady's tyrannical spirit. She was on pouting terms with M. de Saint Foix, the author of some tranquillizing farces, and other sedative little affairs. Now Saint Foix had produced a piece of which he was extremely vain, as well he might be, for it could boast the prettiest title imaginable—that of 'The Graces.' So he became proud of heart of the composition; and much wished to administer a dose of it to the king. Now his most christian majesty was not quite so fond of the play as was Monsieur Saint Foix of 'The Graces.' But the latter having obtained an audience, he assured his majesty that the whole infliction would not endure above two hours; so, on this, his majesty consented to be victimised for that exact time, and no longer.

The author, with his heart swollen with gratified ambition, hastened to the green-room, and prayed Ma'amselle Doligny, the second donna, to hasten over her part, and to retire during the fifth act of the first piece in order to dress immediately for 'The Graces.' This first piece was the tragedy of Olympia, of which the superb Clairon was the heroine, and Doligny her companion. Olympia Clairon got information of this very pretty arrangement, and, irritated that they had dared to make it without her consent, told *Monsieur l'auteur* of 'The Graces' that he was a very bold man, and had no grace in him, to presume to fix the time that her tragedy should occupy; and that it should last just so long as she took pleasure in declaiming it, and that she was now determined to spin it out a well measured half hour more than usual—and, moreover, if Miss Doligny should offer to leave the stage before the fall of the curtain, she most certainly would herself walk off too, and his majesty should know who was to blame.

Never did her ladyship play with more gravity. Her motions were slow and dignified—her pauses emphatic and long, very long indeed. In the interval of the acts she felt unusually faint and languid, and required an age of time to reinvigorate herself. Ma'amselle Doligny dared not disobey her princess. She had no opportunity of making her escape to dress for 'The Graces' until the curtain fell—which it did at last; the piece having endured a mortal three hours, during the last of which the agony of the author was intense. However, he had the consolation to see that his majesty was fast asleep in his box.

With the least possible interval the curtain again rose in honour of 'The Graces,' and, according to order, his majesty was punctually awoke. The sovereign, looking at his watch, fell into a right royal rage, and finding that he had been relieved from the cares of his kingdom for three hours, he left the theatre hastily, calling the mortified author something but little better than a wearisome blackguard, and threatening to send him into the classical retirement of Fort l'Evêque. Saint Foix narrowly escaped a long poetical solitude.

Actors and authors are equally spiteful. The furious scribbler had recourse to an epigram. To understand it fully, the reader must be made aware that Ma'amselle Clairon's first name was Fretillon, and under which the disorders of her youth had been enacted.

'Pour la fameuse Fretillon
On a frappé, dit-on un medaillon;
Mais, à quel prix qu'on le donne,
Fût ce pour douze sous, fût ce même pour un,
Il ne sera jamais aussi commun
Que le fut jadis sa personne.'

This is very bitter; and the more bitter and the more biting, because of its truth. Instead of translating it, we will state the poetical punishment that was inflicted on its author. He wished to enjoy the luxury of an incognito, and thus gather his own laurels unknown. Let no man be sure of praise, however firmly he may believe that he deserves it. He had it read by one of his friends, who was in the secret, at a very large party of literary ladies and gentlemen, as a little effusion which had just got into circulation. It was diligently taken to pieces, unanimously condemned, and pronounced to be detestable. Saint Foix was forced to agree with the general sentiment, and join in the outcry against

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his own verses. Could there be a greater punishment to a very vain man?

But we must return to our prisoners confined in Fort l'Evêque, the most conspicuous of whom was, of course, Ma'amselle Clairon, now suffering in a good cause They all created for themselves a wonderful sympathy, and received many more visits than did our martyred sheriffs when they were incarcerated by the House of Commons, and suffered so nobly upon the best wines and viands which the country could produce. The whole extent of the quay of Fort l'Evêque was, from 'morn till noon, from noon till dewy eve,' covered with carriages.

At length, the prima donna fell really and alarmingly ill, and the two principal gentlemen of his most christian majesty's household, became so very christian and considerate themselves as to permit this lady to return home, remaining always under the surveillance of the police, strictly forbidden to see any of her brothers and sisters of the sock and buskin, and permitted only to receive, during the livelong day, just a half dozen persons. So the gentlemen drew lots, played at primero and ombre, and fought a few duels, in order to gain the distinction of being one of the privileged six.

But how was this ridiculous struggle to end? A struggle in which all suffered, and the court became ridiculous. At this time it must be remembered that France was governed by a despotism, but, like all despotisms that ever existed, rotten at the core, and dependent for existence upon public opinion. Always strong to do private and individual wrongs, but too weak ever to do that which is right, when the right, which is too often the case, is opposed to the popular prejudice of the times—of the three parties, the court, the public, and the players, the players only acted well and honourably—and yet on them fell most of the damage.

The first result of this was, that the author of this memorable '*Siege of Calais*,' Monsieur du Belloi, in order not to be also the author of more sufferings, or even the abettor of these unjust persecutions inflicted upon the players, withdrew his tragedy altogether from the stage; but it had not the effect of procuring the release of the contumacious, who refused to confabulate, before the scenes or elsewhere, with the now too famous and always too infamous Sieur Dubois. Thus, the discriminating French public lost the pleasure, to which they were so much attached, of witnessing the representation of bombast so flattering to the national vanity.

The interdict continued still in force against Ma'amselle Clarion, whilst the other royal servants languished in prison, and these were the best actors of whom France could boast. Then there appeared a book, which had a great run, panegyrising Ma'amselle a great deal above any mortal who ever existed, full of the most sensible and tedious reflections on the injustice of the histrionic professors being compelled to live under the bar of excommunication, when dying not to be allowed to be well oiled, and when dead to be shovelled like dogs and cats into unconsecrated holes.

Then followed, in this work, a summary of all the verses, pictures, busts and engravings, that had appeared in honour of this lady. This pamphlet was the production of an Englishman, Sir Marcus Macdonald, and had the effect of procuring for him an order from the court to leave the kingdom, and the contempt and unpopularity of the public, who now detested the idol whom they had so many years worshipped, because, perhaps for the first time in her life, she dared to be in the right.

Although the two *premiers gentilshommes du roi*, to whom the ladies and gentlemen of the stage lights were indebted for this persecution, went hand in hand with the public, they found themselves in a very contemptible position. The actors had virtually conquered. Among the imprisoned were the celebrated Le Kain, an ancestor, we believe, of the Keans of the present century, Brisard, Préville, Molé, and Dauberval; and as they continued firm, it became necessary to choose between the utter ruin of the French drama, or that of Mister Dubois. Already had the theatre suffered in its finances the loss of 100,000 livres.

Monsieur le Maréchal de Richelieu, le premier des deux premiers gentilshommes du roi, found himself in an awkward predicament: for, carried away by his virtuous affection for the charming Dubois fille, he had determined not to yield; but ultimately the conqueror of Minorca was forced disgracefully to raise the siege of *Fort l'Evêque*, nor could he prevent those who had there been confined from coming out with all the honours of war, after they had effectually raised the 'SIEGE OF CALAIS,' in spite of the succours of a marshal so renowned.

As may well be supposed, the public became, in the end, ashamed of the part which they had taken in the disgraceful business, and at length came to the conviction that Dubois had been justly expelled from the company. Two large volumes would not comprise all the stories, anecdotes and squibs, to which this transaction gave birth.

In order to display the bitterness and contempt which was entertained against these poor players at the commencement of this fracas, a very ungallant colonel of infantry

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exclaimed from the pit, 'I only wish that I had my regiment here.' The saloons and the corridors resounded with imprecations and abuse, during the first days of the squabble, against the comedians. Rogues, beggars, vagabonds, infamous animals, were the favourite terms with which they were honoured under their own roof. A man of a little common sense stopped one of these illustrious bawlers in the midst of one of these noble orations, and pointing out to him, over the fire-place, the bust of Molière, he coolly said to him, 'There is one of these vagabonds, whom the world will envy France for having possessed, more than all the first lords of the bedchamber that ever she could boast of.'

Another symptom indicated the bad taste of the times, and the low ebb of talent that then prevailed in Paris. Not a good song, a tolerable copy of verses, or a readable epigram, did a subject so fertile for the display of wit produce.

We must not just yet lose sight of the prima donna, Clairon; a person, theatrically considered, certainly almost as honourable to our neighbours as is the transcendent Siddons to ourselves; and making due allowance for the national taste of the times then prevalent on the other side of the water, nearly the equal of our immortal actress. From the noble fortitude which she had displayed, that happened which every sensible and right-minded person predicted; on coming out of prison, she indignantly demanded her dismissal from the 'royal property,' for such she and her comrades were actually considered.

This request the great lord of the bedchamber with the marshal's baton frankly said that he never would grant, but he was considerate enough to allow the lady one year of absence, in order to recover her health. This was looked upon, in Paris, as a great act of condescension on the part of the marshal, and praises for his courtesy resounded from all, with the exception of the actors.

How much better would it have been to have avoided this ridiculous contention, which too well characterized the tone of the manners of the age, and which gave rise to numerous other little acts, not conferring too much honour upon a people who prided themselves upon being in the van of civilisation! It was humiliating to the public, and to the authority which abetted them, to have exercised so much tyrannical harshness upon a class for having displayed an honourable feeling, with no other result than that of preserving, for a time, the miserable actor, and worse private individual, Dubois, on the stage, and losing the valuable talents of Mademoiselle Clairon and those of the best actors in France. This was not the way to cherish merit, nor will prisons ever become the best schools for acting. To be sure, there were the little theatres and puppet-shows to which to repair, and tumbling, grimacing, and rope-dancing still existed to console the Parisians for the loss of a set of people, who, after all, only knew how properly to recite the verses of Corneille, Racine, of Molière and Voltaire.

As the Clairon has imperceptibly become our heroine, we cannot yet part with her; for, although she had not sufficient genius to found a school of acting, or to be imitated beyond her own circle, she was much too clever to be wholly forgotten, even by Englishmen.

About a year after her retirement, in March, the fashionable world of that day began to wear brighter looks, as the rumour became very general, that, to conciliate her, and to induce her once more to resume her place on the boards, vast projects were being concerted that would dignify the then degraded state of the royal comedians. In the first place, they were to be relieved from the excommunication of the priests, their oaths to be available in courts of justice, and their bodies to be held worthy to rot in consecrated ground, and they to be fully endued with all the civil rights of a French subject. It was also contemplated, by letters-patent, to make of the national theatre a dramatic Royal Academy, and the actors thenceforward to be called Dramatic Royal Academicians, and to have a suitable rank. This idea was not bad. Besides all this, as, in virtue of the institution of the *Comédie Française*, the players had always made a part of *la Chambre du Roi*, an actor was to rank with and have the title of valet-de-chambre of the king, and an actress that of *femme-de-chambre* of the queen; vain distinctions, but very palatable to these sort of people.

Under all these conditions, Ma'amselle Clairon condescended to accept of the olive branch, to forget the severities of M. le Maréchal de Richelieu, the horrors of Fort l'Evêque, and again to return to her duty. But all these fine promises bore no fruit of performance. It was thought that there was a religious merit in breaking faith with the excommunicated, and the most unchristian confessor of his most christian majesty proved too strong for the rights of common honesty and the wishes of the public. None of the stipulated conditions upon which Clairon resumed her avocations were fulfilled. When the just demands of the players were argued before the king in council, it was observed by the Pharisees that they, the players, were just as well off now as in the reign of Louis XIII., and that there was now not the least

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occasion to better their condition. So the king very piously decided against all innovation, and thus the betrayed actors were very charitably left in their forlorn state of perdition. On this, our heroine again demanded her dismissal, which was immediately granted, the only part that a woman of the least pretensions to a soul above that of an abject slave could take.

Let the considerate reader reflect for a moment on this state of things. On the score of religion, the priests would not take off from the actors the ban of excommunication, nor permit them the rites of christian burial, nor would the court suffer them, without the greatest difficulty, to withdraw from this their sinful avocation. They were thus consigned, according to the prevalent faith, to everlasting torments, to please the clergy, whilst they could not emancipate themselves from this dreadful penalty, in order that they might still administer, not to the pleasure, (for he took but little interest in the drama,) but to the pomp and pageantry of the king.

Superstition and tyranny are inseparable.

Mademoiselle remained in abeyance, and was fast sinking into oblivion, until the latter end of 1768. Two years and a half, with a people so volatile as the French, is a dreadful space of time during which to keep alive the remembrance of a ci-devant favourite. In the September of the above year, the young king of Denmark came to the capital to see in what manner the Parisians ate, drank, and played the fool. He was fêted, of course. In fact, they gave the poor young man neither respite nor rest, and ended by nearly killing him with a succession of pleasures—he escaped this blissful sort of death at the expense of a dangerous illness.

However, among other amusements, it was reserved for Madame la duchesse de Villeroi to astonish him by the dramatic powers of our heroine, at her little private theatre. This elegant building was so small that it would scarcely contain one hundred spectators, but as all these were the *élite* of the monarchy, Clairon had an audience worthy of her talents. She supported the characters of Dido, and of Roxana in the tragedy of Bajazet. After the performance she was presented by the duchess to his Danish majesty, who, taking from his own finger a ring, placed it on that of the actress.

Notwithstanding this royal courtesy, the actress was not so satisfied with the monarch as was the monarch with the actress. In the character of Dido she did not find him sufficiently tender, in her character of Roxana sufficiently humble, and as Ma'amselle Clairon by no means sufficiently penetrated with admiration. Altogether the young king had the consummation of unhappiness to displease the somewhat stilted heroine of the French stage.

We will conclude by a criticism on her style of acting, which we have gathered from various sources, and from her contemporaries. She appears to have been a great formalist. She carried the polish of mere art to that degree of excess, that she threatened to ruin a second time the true style of declamation which had been formerly established in France by Baron and Ma'amselle Lecouvrer. The affectation and monotony of her speaking and acting were only discernible to real connoisseurs. The strength of her lungs, a clear and sonorous articulation, and the sudden vehemence of her manner when the least expected, and in the most quiet scenes, did not fail to dazzle the gaping fools of the pit, who had always their large hands ready to applaud anything which took them by surprise, and, with them, that which is the farthest from nature is always the most wonderful and the finest.

This taking an audience by storm is totally incompatible with the true sublime, and ends by ultimately destroying in the actor that delicacy of perception necessary to discover the nicer shades and tints of character, which, however, are generally things lost to the audience. This is the worst feature in Clairon's character. On the other side, it may well be said that she had fathomed the profundity of her art, and had so well studied that nature which she did not possess, that she insensibly led the public taste from that simplicity and purity of acting which will always be the greatest charm to the cultivated mind, and which ought to be replaced by nothing, however dazzling and imposing.

Clairon well knew how to imitate the utmost simplicity, and nature the most unsophisticated, but the effect of study would, in spite of all her efforts, continually appear. Her consummate art would break out so repeatedly that our admiration of it always smothered every other emotion. Her example, however, became contagious. Her success created imitators, and the French tragedy insensibly modelled itself upon her views, and became pompous, monotonous, and cold. Is not this the character of tragic acting in France even at the present day?

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RECOLLECTIONS OF A STUDENT.

THE POLISH HARP-GIRL.

BY THE AUTHOR OF 'THE WOOD-SPIRIT.'

Wer Waffen trägt und kriegt
Wer an den Ketten liegt
Wer auf dem Meere wallt
Wer voll ist schwerer Sorgen
Der spricht: wann wird es Morgen?
Aurora! Komm doch bald!

OPITZ.

No sooner had the tidings arrived of the abduction and captivity of the palatine, than the Harbinger of Death hastened to the castle of his victim, whose magnificent estates had been granted to him in consideration—thus ran the words of the ukase—of his eminent and valuable services. The serfs and tenantry were all to be transported to the Asiatic frontier of the empire; but the instant they heard this decree, by a simultaneous impulse many fled across the country, forming the germ of those bands, afterwards so famous in the forest of Bialowies; others, wrought to despair, preferring to die in their native land, rather than be borne away, or hunted down like wild beasts, flew to arms, stirred by the thrilling summons of the lovely but maniac mother, who, released from her prison, haunted the house like a spirit.

The bailiff sent by Orloff to take possession of his new domain, and expel the ancient inhabitants, was by them killed on the spot, and the Harbinger himself soon came with a band and colony of soldiers. The tenantry had retired within the castle, that loured down in mingled magnificence and gloom on the advancing foe. The approach of the latter had been expected for some time, and emissaries sent abroad to stir the surrounding country, in the vain hope that it would rise and aid. But the leaders of the secret conspiracy were too vigilant to sanction or permit so ruinous an attempt at that time, and all remained tranquil.

* * * * *

A dark bar heaved up from the skyward heath, a strange clangour floated from the distant hollows, and the beleaguered saw the living lines of the coming death advancing speedily upon them.

The summons of Orloff was replied to with contempt. Acquainted with the fearful injuries their loved master had sustained at the hands of him, now come to lord it over his estates, fired by the sight of their kind and lovely mistress, who breathed such words of fire, such dire and thrilling adjurations, as might have summoned the dead from their ancestral graves, the fearful spirit that animated her came over them, and, like a band of avenging furies, they gathered on the stately battlements. The huge banner of ancient Poland floated on the highest tower, broad, shadowy, gigantic, like a godhead on a throne, and as it moved on the air, the proud eagle seemed to flap his kingly wings.

A smile of vexation passed across the face of Orloff as he surveyed the preparations for defence.

'Fire not on that castle!' he exclaimed, 'injure it at your peril!' dreading lest it should be destroyed; while his greedy eye feasted on the gorgeous pile soon to be his own, and he revelled by anticipation on the broad and fertile lands from which he would wring fresh food for his wasteful riots and gold-bought impunity of crime.

It was night around the castle of S——. The calm moonbeams bathed its huge battlements with a holy light, such as lingers in the aisles of dim cathedrals, bringing out and softening by turns their bold proportions.

Nothing stirred across the plains save the moon-chased shadows flitting away stealthily, like evil thoughts before prayer!

Orloff had postponed taking possession of the castle till to-morrow, owing to the resistance he anticipated, and fearful lest the beautiful architecture of the exterior, or costly internal decorations, might be injured in a nocturnal assault.

All was silent, and the Harbinger had stepped forth from his tent to contemplate the exquisite scene before him—the moonlit castle, the hushed plains, the whispering woods, that seemed conversing with their leaves, the remote hills, from which ever and anon broke a mysterious and unearthly sound, as though they had overheard words from heaven, and repeated them to each other in awe, while far distant wound the Vistula, glowing white, pure, and shadowless, like a path for the spirits of men to their eternal mansions.

While thus he watched, the music of a soft voice floated downward from the castle, so sadly sweet, and withal so wild, that even the ruthless Harbinger listened in admiration. Little did he dream of what was borne onward by the tide of that melody—of what was summoned by those words.

THE MANIAC LADY'S SONG.

'The lady sits on the moonlit tower,
Night's woof is woven far,
The castle lies beneath her
Like a cloud beneath a star.
The lady's shadowy bright,
And that is dark as night—
'Tis a cloud beneath a star!

The owls forget to hoot
O'er the moonbeam-paven heath,

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And the winds are hot and still,
For the dew hath been their death.
It stole upon their wings,
And slew the tempest-kings—
The dew hath been their death.

The spoiler's 'neath the castle,
His band is gathering deep;—
O no! 'tis but the moor-blight
Glides o'er the forest's sleep.
Its night-mare spell it weaves,
And fever shakes their leaves,
For the forests dream in sleep.

T' poisonous damp would blot
That lonely star away,
When in the cloud beneath her
She sends her kindling ray.
Deep in its lordly shade
Unkindled lightning laid—
It wakes beneath her ray!

Then from its robe of darkness
Forth bursts the glorious flame,
Joying like a captive child
That has broken from its chain.
Its arms wave o'er the heath,
And grasp at all beneath—
It burns its shattered chain.

On! my fierce lightnings on!
The sable game's in view;
I start ye from your leashes—
My hounds of fire, pursue!
Stream forth a joyous pack,
On the tempest's scattered rack—
My hounds of fire, pursue!'

The soft melodious voice died away on the tower, but was still heard at intervals from the interior of the building, faint and low, like a bird warbling in sleep.

Suddenly a deep groan smote the ear of the Harbinger—a cry for aid, again and again, simultaneous from opposite sides of the camp. He started, for all else was silent as death, and fearfully that sudden sound broke on the hush, stunning from contrast! A wild and shadowy form flitted past him, gaunt, ghastly, and horrible; another and another swept by, a few yards distant—a spectral line! He raised his voice—but it was needless; a deep gathering, like the surging up of waves after a calm, announced that the camp was aroused, while ever and anon came hollow groan or muttered imprecation, and through the tents of the sleepers rushed those strange and terrible visitors;—the muster-word of the assembling soldiery, as they were formed by their officers, announced a rapidly-approaching change in the scene.

Soon a loud thunder shook the camp, and a wave of light swept over the ground, as the Russian musqueteers scattered a shower of deadly fire from their close-formed line—a loud cheer burst from them as, through the moon-pierced smoke, they saw the falling bodies of the advancing Poles. Volley succeeded volley, like echo of the preceding, cheer rang on cheer, as the Russians observed the effect of their fire, while deep silence reigned amid their opponents. No shout answered, not a shot was fired, but fierce and voiceless the serfs swept on against the enemy. In that dread midnight they had done their work well in the slumbering camp; and when it was aroused, the soldier, starting at the 'larum to awaken his comrade, found a corse by his side, and an avenger striding over him, who, before he could rise and struggle, plunged a scythe in his breast.

The besieged, seeing that resistance within the walls of the castle was vain, had determined on surprising the camp by a night assault, and, at a time when the sky was partially obscured, had stolen on unobserved, shrouded by the furze and brake, killed the drowsy and unsuspecting sentinels at their posts, invaded the tents, and thus great numbers of the Russians had fallen before they were fully aware of the extent of their danger. In a serried body the troops now grappled with their desperate assailants. Though not possessed of fire-arms, the latter soon rendered those of the soldiery unavailing, as they joined in close combat, and struggled hand to hand.

Terror overwhelmed the Harbinger, as the mingled tide of friend and foe swept around him; but he escaped unharmed, as though a charm guarded his life, and at length, as the din grew weaker and subsided, a smile returned to his fiendish countenance.

'Fools!' he exclaimed, 'they have done my work! There can be no more resistance now from the castle! The building is safe! Heavens! what a noble pile!'

Dark grandeur wrapped the gigantic edifice, but, as he spoke, a figure was discernible within, passing rapidly with a torch athwart the galleries and chambers, and a light shot up within the highest tower. From window to window might be traced its internal ascent from the base, a flaming spectre mounting the lofty stair. At first it was wayward and wavering alternate gleams and shadows, as though the gods of light and darkness were struggling for mastery, but anon it leaped upward with a joyous bound, like a fierce monster freed from fetters, lashing the inner walls that stood revealed to those without.

At the same time that ominous torch was traced flitting about the wings of the castle, a red star amid darkness—but soon where it had been, surged the keen and angry conflagration.

Paralyzed by astonishment and awe stood the Russian troops, gazing on the magnificent spectacle, as, with crash succeeding crash, the weaker parts of the building fell in, forming a crimson furnace below, from which

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rose the now solitary and massive towers, louring over the bright ruin. The entire castle was now a prey to the flames, when, up that tower where they had first appeared, rushed a human form, in dark outline against the waving light. Its ascent might be traced till it reached the topmost height, and stood upon the battlement, that rocked as the waves of that burning sea beat against their base.

It was the maniac lady. The flames rushed after her as though in pursuit, pouring out through the windows and shattered roof till they played round her like a robe, pure, bright, and beautiful, as though angels had arrayed her in the garments of heaven, that her soul might appear in festal guise before the eternal gate.

Her form seemed dilated far beyond the human size by the kindled atmosphere, and her shadow fell over the plain, wrapping the host beneath in ominous gloom. Wildly she waved her arms towards heaven, and as she waved, dark shadows sailed across the land, as though she showered visible curses from her burning throne.

The madness seemed to have left her in that terrific hour. Though before she had stormed and raved, she grew calm as her doom approached; and when the serfs rushed forth from the castle, she mounted the ramparts, and over the tide of the battle beneath poured the soft stream of her musical song, as if in pity, that the listening angels might not hear the blasphemies of murder through the melody of her chant.

Then, when death had silenced the horrid din below, and the last of her poor defenders had fallen, she kindled that mighty conflagration, that the Russian boor might not revel in the home of the Polish prince, nor the lawless ruffian desecrate the dwelling of Poland's sweetest daughters.

Now she stood above her work, that surged and raged around her and below, and her voice came borne on the tide of flame, the avenger's paean over the avenged, as she denounced the wrath of her father-land on the oppressor.

Still she seemed unharmed, (and, in truth, she felt no pain, for her thoughts and her heart were with those who had preceded her,) while the glowing and sparkling mass of the tower rose beneath, like a palace of chrysolyte and ruby reared by celestial hands, and as its hollow and glittering crust fell in, the burning pinions of the conflagration wafted her soul to heaven.

A breathless silence swayed the awed spectators. Well had that gallant defence been achieved, nobly those sacred memorials of old wrested from the ruthless spoiler.

That defence might have taught the invader what he had to expect from the heroism of the country on which he trampled; it was a protest before Heaven of the oppressed against the oppressor; but no! fearfully his vengeance, and this brave achievement was but the ostensible cause for taking every means of defence from a people that had already been disarmed. An ukase appeared, commanding the Poles to surrender all the metal they possessed; and so rigidly was this enforced, that even the common household implements were taken away, the very knives from their tables, and the ploughshares from the fields.

The Russian was thus baffled in his hopes of possessing the palatine's mansion, and when after a time he appeared with fresh hordes to people the ruined solitude, he found the waters of the Vistula rolling over the domain, as though the noble river had risen to finish the efforts of man, and stepped between the tyrant and his prey.

A superstitious dread pervaded that spot of ruin ever after; many affirmed that the spirit of the lost Theresa would hover over it at night, and that of the exiled palatine rise from its Siberian grave, and cross the wild Ural to haunt his father's home. They believed the latter dead, for they had but heard indistinctly rumoured the cause and manner of his sudden disappearance, and a form like his was at times seen wandering stealthily on the banks of the stagnant water.

There was in truth good cause for these surmises, for it was the palatine himself who had escaped from his place of exile and returned. The hand of Heaven had rescued him thus.

On the march to Siberia the weary and fettered exile sat one evening surrounded by his guard, who were crossing a lovely and lofty pass in the deserted Ural mountain They had kindled a watch-fire, and were making preparations for their belated meal, for the pass was of such extent that they could not cross it in one day's march, obstructed as the track was with heaped-up snow.

The evening loured down, and around the peaks of the loftiest mountains might be seen gathering dun, white, massy clouds, from the outer edges of which flared long pale streaks, like streamers heralding those wan aërial legions.

The Cossack guard looked up and trembled at the appearances portending a snow-storm, then, signing the cross, folded their fur cloaks closer, and turned to rest; all but one, whose duty it was to watch above the prisoner.

Gradually the clouds became more dun and settled, and from peak to peak slowly sailed detached masses, like fresh legions ad-

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vancing from afar to strengthen that awful host.

Presently the heavy and lifeless air was rent by a moan-like sound, coming from a distant mountain, and the prolonged but echoless howl wound along the entire chain, like the hungry cry of some approaching monster, scenting a far off prey.

The next moment a commotion was discernible amid the loftiest clouds, and then the eddy cleft their masses and they seemed gurgling down the sides of the rocks. Anon came a blast, sharp, near, and shrill; the whole scene above, the fantastically-shaped clouds, that looked like images cut out of lead, began to shift and change, and glide past each other in strange confusion,—another pause, and the whirlwind burst from its prison, casting the snow-chains that had bound it indignantly to the earth.

The awakened guards started up as the dreadful masses fell over them, but in vain,—the fierce demon of the Ural was upon them, —in vain they struggled,—the exile beheld their writhing forms through the ever-thickening folds of the snow, that beat them down as they rose, while the mad wind hissed its ghastly music in their ears. The soldier who had waked and watched resisted the longest, and had he followed the impulse of his prisoner, who clung to a sharp mass of rock that partly sheltered him from the storm, might have escaped.

Closer and closer the white shroud swept around the doomed group, till they were visible no longer. A smooth cold surface spread over what but a few moments back was a glowing mass of life, and the terrible storm went away, yelling and singing over the distant mountains.

The prisoner was free—none but God and himself in that dreadful solitude; he knelt and prayed, and then turned homeward. I know not how long a period he spent among those storm-haunted mountains, or through what perils he accomplished his return; years may have passed, but after their lapse a solitary figure was seen flitting at times amid the ruins of the castle of S. It was the palatine haunting like a ghost his once happy home, and by his side was seen a fairy, or as some believed, the phantom of Theresa. It was Zaleska, his last and loveliest daughter, who had been saved by the unswerving watchfulness of his surviving vassals, despite the search and tyranny of Orloff.

Here they lived concealed, their existence unknown, save to the count's former associates in conspiracy; and here was one of those dark places of meeting, of which Russia might not dream, strict as was her vigilance. Let not a government suppose, however widely it may send its spies, however closely it may pry into the private life of the subject, that it can baffle the sure and secret march of liberty. Like the strong under-current beneath the smooth surface of an unruffled sea, it holds its way unsuspected and unexplored, sure to emerge to light, however late, and, with its calm but unconquerable force, dash the stale fabric of tyranny into endless ruin.

In his concealment the palatine still contrived to inspire and aid in the great plan of restoring Poland, and rallying his former friends around him. There, as you are aware, I beheld him for the first time—there the outburst of the revolution found him prepared for action, and all hailed his appearance as an omen of success. The dreadful debt of vengeance, impersonified in him, was more stirring than the most eloquent appeal.

* * * * * *

On the evening on which I interrupted the regular course of my narrative to reveal past events, the palatine had hastened to Warsaw to prevent the free departure of the grand duke Constantine. But a fatality seemed to attend all who made the attempt. The high-souled, the brave Maurice Mochnacki scarcely escaped with life, when he urged the senate to sacrifice the tyrant. Colonel Kicki, who was afterwards called the Polish Alcibiades, enlisted a body of volunteers, and was hastening on the steps of the fugitive, when he met with an accident that detained him a prisoner in his house till the scourge of Poland had recrossed the frontier, and now the same weird fate seemed to interpose between the oppressor and the palatine.

The latter had been received with enthusiasm by the multitude, and the cheers that greeted his re-appearance from the senate-house, where he had once more resumed his place with the pomp of a Polish noble, grew deeper and louder, when it was known with what intent he had appeared, and that without the gates was gathered a band of the bravest, mounted on the fleet horses of the Ukraine, waiting but for the word of the palatine to be launched, all hot and fiery, like a thunderbolt, on the track of the flying tyrant.

Count S. was hastening to meet his devoted troop; Zaleska, the beautiful, was by his side, proceeding to accompany him to the barrier, on a coal-black steed, like a lovely genius of good towering over a fettered fiend of darkness, and with enthusiastic cheers the excited populace heralded their champion on his way. The success of the enterprise seemed certain. A strong body of the most devoted patriots would immediately accompany the palatine, and reinforcements to the amount of several thousand volunteers were prepared to join him on his way. They were sure of

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overtaking the grand duke before he could disentangle his army from the morasses; add to this the determined valour of the Poles, who would come fresh into action against dispirited and worn-out troops, upon whom moreover they would rush utterly unexpected in an unguarded moment, and little doubt could be entertained as to the result.

A fierce triumphant joy burnt in the heart of the palatine at the anticipated conflict.

'They shall be silent,' he said, 'loud as their march may be—they shall stop, and struggle, and sink, brave as may be their bearing, when the hot torrents of the Polish battalions pour on them from every side! Clear the way, my good friends,' he continued, 'an errand like mine brooks no delay! Now on, brave comrades!' to the troop behind.

At this moment a horseman was seen in the distance on the verge of the crowd. His tall figure might have been discerned for some time soaring over the masses, above which the head of his gigantic charger scarcely appeared. With difficulty it seemed to press nearer, while the eye of its rider was cast searchingly around, as though endeavouring to discover one individual amid that sea of heads. Presently, when the small troop of the palatine became visible in the light cast from the illuminated ballroom, the strange horseman was seen to press on with redoubled force. He and the count, with his mounted friends, were the only objects soaring above the dense and level mass of the mob below, and an invisible attraction seemed to draw those two points to each other.

When the space was cleared on the path of the Polish troop, then the stranger, taking advantage of the opening, was seen to hurry near, rushing on like a dark thunder-cloud, till he flitted past the palatine. One word he hissed in the ear of the latter, who instantly carried his hand to his sword; but simultaneously the other sped by, and a streak of fire flashed for a moment over the spot. The palatine was seen to reel and stagger, and then fall from the saddle, while two or three bounds of his powerful charger carried the assassin far from his victim, and then leaping from his seat, he lashed his horse away, and in the confusion disappeared among the crowd.

Strange as it may seem for the palatine to have been murdered in the midst of his friends and a countless multitude, for the action to have passed unnoticed, and the assassin to escape, it is nevertheless averred, and perhaps the very density of the mob, and the excitement under which it laboured, may have facilitated the escape of a cool and determined man.

Zaleska beheld all as in a horrid dream. She had long noticed the appearance of the murderer on the horizon of that living tide, and had pointed him out to her father; but the supposition of any one attacking him thus surrounded seemed too ludicrous to be entertained even for a moment. As it was, the general belief obtained that the palatine had been killed by an accidental shot amid the general *feu de joie*, and there were not a few who connected this strange event with the fatality which seemed to attend all the pursuers of Constantine.

There were some, however, among whom it was rumoured that the palatine had fallen by the hand of an emissary of Orloff, (nay, some said by his own,) and strange tales were circulated as to what were the incentives, and what was to be the reward of so dangerous and almost hopeless an undertaking.

* * * * * *

The deed is done—the last pulsation of that gallant heart is stilled—the present is again before us.

I raised Zaleska from the ground, and gently pressed her cold form towards me. Amid that multitude I saw, I felt but her. 'Protect her—I confide her to your care!' were the last words of the palatine ere he died, and I swore to obey and justify his behest.

I will not tell you what passed further. What care any, what care even you, who are my friend, for the mute progress of our love?—mute, for, amid those vast aspirations, love, though it burned as deep, but seldom found a voice.

O the hopes of our hearts—the dearest, brightest, best, are trampled down by our fellow-men, like flowers beneath an army! And how many a harrowing grief, how many a deep lesson remains unnoticed and untold! *Time* flies away with a countless load of events—*History*, the *saving genius*, throws herself in his path—he hurries on, and as he rushes past she snatches at his burden, and saves some few events from the exulting robber. Yet, alas! but too often she grasps the gaudy and useless, lured by its glitter, and allows the sterling and useful to pass by unnoticed. Thence, doubtlessly, History is represented as a woman. Sometimes, peradventure, she will gain a glorious treasure; then she will go and exult over it in secret, keeping it to herself a long, long time, till at length she brings it forth, distorted, magnified or diminished, and laughs and chuckles at the bright phantom she has conjured from *Time*, whose other name is *Oblivion*.

Fate was hurrying Poland on to *Grochow*. Every day, every hour teemed with some great event, and to the immortal honour of

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Poland be it, that amid the grand majestic rising of an outraged nation no innocent blood was shed, no murder stained the young heaven of its liberty. Notwithstanding the direful wrongs it had suffered, now when power was given to revenge, it never once misused the fearful gift, but sought peace, peace at any price, so that it was not bought with infamy and slavery. Thence the negotiations between the dictator and the czar; and when, as might be foreseen, they ended in the insults of the arrogant autocrat, then Poland drew up its protest to the world, then her devoted children raised the watchword of freedom in the foul dens of tyranny; and when they were betrayed, deserted, outraged by the banded despots of earth, then she displayed her own magnificent resources, not of wealth and numbers, but the noble courage of a few—then she stood forth over the ashes of her former greatness, like a bereft child fighting on its father's grave.

But first every method was tried that a dignified and moderate policy could resort to. The question was first debated between the Polish senate and the Russian czar; Lubecki and Jezierski were severally sent to St. Petersburgh, to return with messages of insult and indignity; then, when justice could no longer be expected from Nicholas, when even its show was thrown aside, the brave people, scorning submission, proclaimed their independence, and published those thrilling manifestoes that became so famous over Europe.

I will not narrate the changes in the government, nor the rise and destruction of the various factions, that took place before its final formation. Suffice it to say, that owing to Chlopicki's non-use of the power intrusted to him, (he was a great general, but no statesman,) the legislature was changed from a single dictator to a diet of one hundred and fifty members, which was opened on the 19th of January by Prince Adam Czartoryski. The senators and deputies signed the nation's manifesto to Europe, depriving the house of Romanoff of the Polish crown, absolving all Poles from their allegiance to the czar, and decreeing the national independence.

Soon afterwards Prince Radziwill was appointed to the command of the army, and accepted the high trust with the words, 'Such as I have been I shall remain.'

Thus everything was drawing towards its completion, and the still discordant elements were dispersed by the wisdom of the legislature. A faction under Lelewel, Roman Soltyk, and Maurice Mochnacki, constituted itself into a 'Patriotic Society,' and announced its formation to the diet.

'Away with your Patriotic Societies—every man in the nation is a patriot!' exclaimed the indignant deputies, and the faction vanished before the lofty words.

In vain the wreck of this party attempted to stir the citizens; in vain it instituted festivals and processions in honour of Poland's ancient martyrs: they were solemn heart-stirring pageants, but they only united all the more in one great cause.

On the 25th of January the formal deposition of Nicholas was to take place, and on the same day, in glorious contrast, a funeral procession, commemorative of those champions of Russian liberty who perished in 1826, moved from the gates of the university.

Immense multitudes accompanied the funeral train, in which the academic guard bore a coffin dedicated to Ryleyeff, Bestuzeff, Pestel, Muravieff, and Kochowskie, whose names were graven on five suits of armour borne behind the bier.

Some turbulent spirits, foremost of their number Gurowski, tried to excite the multitude by inflammatory addresses, but in vain; the people now confided in their leaders, and looked forward only to the horizon of their future, in which light was struggling with darkness in fearful and unequal strife.

A far different and memorable scene was enacting in the diet. Jezierski had delivered the reply of the autocrat, and the two proclamations of the Russian field-marshal, Diebitch Zabalkansky, had been read, adding fuel to the fire of indignation, commanding the Poles to submit, and erect scaffolds for the leaders of the rebellion, or expect extermination at the hands of the all-powerful czar. Then the marshal of the diet, with a burst of lofty enthusiasm, delivered an impassioned address, summoning the nation formally to depose the tyrant, who girt his throne with war and death.

Deep silence succeeded his summons, like a shadow following fire. Then Ledochowski arose, and in a voice of thunder spoke those memorable words that found an echo where none had ever been.

'Let our lips speak the thoughts of our hearts! Shout as with *one* voice, *Away with Nicholas!*'

'*Away with Nicholas!*' rang from every side of that historic hall, as the senate was carried by the energy of Ledochowski. The poet Niemsewicz drew up the act of deposition, and in that hour the revolution was perfected.

The 29th beheld its internal formation completed, the power of the constitutional king being vested in the hands of five persons, who were to represent the 'National Government of the kingdom of Poland,' in

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which all measures were to be decided by the majority. Prince Czartoryski was unanimously elected president; the other members were Vincent Niemeiowski, Theophile Morawski, Stanislaus Barzykowski, and Lelewel.

The revolutionary legislature terminated on the 4th of February, when Poland was declared a constitutional monarchy, and its ancient throne was again open to the princes of Europe, not as of old, glowing with victories and splendour, but storm-battered, an uneasy seat, with a sword for a sceptre, and battles for its pageants.

Pursuant to this noble assumption of national independence, the Polish people, expecting and relying on the assistance of the various states of Europe, sent their envoys abroad to those courts, from most of whom they had received assurances of support.

Prussia, most intimately concerned in these events, might have acted a noble part and one which would have been more to her advantage, than fostering the dangerous and overwhelming power of Russia. But she proved herself an able assistant to the latter, and strove to her utmost to oppress the brave and devoted people now struggling for their rights. The Prussian consul was recalled from Warsaw, all supplies of money and arms were intercepted, and the gallant exiles returning to their native land arrested and imprisoned, while a cabinet order forbade all Poles of the Grand Duchy of Posen to cross the frontier, on pain of confiscation, notwithstanding which numbers repaired to Warsaw. Colonel Szyrma, the former commander of the Academic Guard, on his way to England with the national manifesto, was incarcerated at Breslau, and, on the erroneous report that the Russians had taken Warsaw, escorted to the confines by *Land-Dragoner*, who were charged to surrender him to the Cossacks, and take a receipt as for goods delivered. Austria, fearing the encroachments of Russia, evinced a more friendly feeling, but withheld all support, (except leaving its frontiers open for a considerable time,) whilst Count Roman Zaluski was not even allowed to land in Sweden.

The Marquis Wielopolski, on his arrival in London, found the Grey administration determined to maintain peace at any cost, and his appeal to the magnanimous nation found no other reply, elicited no other sympathy, than the unbought eulogiums of an independent press.

The chief hopes of Poland were fixed on France, who, always an ally and at times a friend, seemed now summoned to hold forth an aiding hand more powerfully than ever, since the Revolution of July. The envoy, Wolicki, was received with distinction in Paris, for Sebastiani looked upon the Polish Revolution as a fortunate event for France, which beheld itself placed in a critical and embarrassing position by internal dissension, the affairs of Belgium, and the threats of Russia. The minister, well aware that Russia would be wholly occupied for some time by the revolt of the Poles, in whose armies he once had served, and whose heroism he justly estimated, received the envoy with the most encouraging promises, and a show of protection, he took suitable measures to have magnified to the Russian cabinet. This extorted from the latter the concession he wished to obtain; namely the recognition of Louis Philippe. After this point had been gained, Sebastiani dropped the affair, with the wish that the Poles would arrange their differences amicably with the Russian government.

Owing to the spirited efforts of Lafayette, —be honour to his memory!—Bignon and Lamarque, the Duke de Montemart was sent on a mission to St. Petersburgh, but merely authorized to act in adherence to the treaty of Vienna. His mission, only intended to pacify the factions of France, soon ceased, for the deposition of Nicholas had taken place before the duke reached his destination.

Thus ended Poland's hopes of aid and sympathy, and she stood in her utter abandonment, proud, sorrowing, and beautiful, a sad and lovely image, destined to float on for ever in the tide of history!

But not in vain shall her heroes have bled, holy martyrs for mankind,—not in vain those sacred voices have rung over the earth: the spark struck far—and it shall kindle farther, —from the central heart of Poland it darted to the confines; the remote provinces of the ancient empire, long separated, half forgotten, responded to the stirring call of the diet, and as Constantine passed, like a ghastly phantom engendered by the corruption of dying tyranny, a horrid and unnatural birth, as he passed, with the first martyr of New Poland, the gallant Lukasinski, drawn, haggard, wild, and spectral, from his fearful dungeon, and held before the eyes of all, chained to a cannon like an untamed beast, then the electric fire flew from heart to heart.

'We wish to embrace the representatives of ancient Poland to her farthest confines within these walls!' Thus spoke the members of the diet in Warsaw,—a wild wish, that hope could scarcely dream to see realized—but they *came* from her farthest confines, where memory of Poland was scarce supposed to live, and through the gates of the historic city streamed the bold legions from afar. Band after band they came, proud, glorious guests within these venerable walls; —even the Mahommedan Tatars, on their

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tameless steeds, the soldier-citizens of Cracow, the brilliant cavalry of Kuszel, the Mazours, the Cracouses of Poniatowski, the volunteers of Kalish, and the lancers of Zamoyski. Zamoyski, name dear to every Pole! five brothers served at the same time in different regiments; that ancient and wealthy house put forth its last strength in an immortal effort for its country.

'To arms, Poles!' rang from the palace of Sobieski; 'To arms, to arms!' sounded from Augustow to the Baltic. Monastery, altar, college, were deserted by monk and priest and student; the church-bells were torn from the towers and converted into cannon, changing their mellow music to discordant thunder, but they rung forth as sacred a 'larum on the field of battle as over God's own altar!—The walls of the houses were scraped to find materials for gunpowder, the lovely daughters of Poland severed their long tresses to furnish cables for the arsenals, soldiers refused their pay to enrich the treasury of the rising kingdom; every private of the fourth of the line gave thirty roubles, his savings during seven years; family plate, hereditary jewels, with which, under other circumstances, the possessor would not have parted save with life, were cheerfully bestowed; the diet called on the citizens to assist in raising works around Praga, situated on the Vistula opposite Warsaw, and at her summons her thousands came, of every rank and age, delicate women and children not shunning the deadly labour: peers and prelates, mixed with the humblest of their countrymen, toiled from morning till night at the gigantic undertaking. A hundred beautiful girls from the country, bearing spades, proceeded in procession to the walls. I met their advancing train as they came, led by a beauteous form in vestal white, with purple ribands in her rich dark hair and a banner in her hand, on which glowed in golden letters the fervent lines of a national bard. How the hearts of the Poles thrilled at such a sight! It wrought like inspiration. That girl was Zaleska! that band was hers! Fair daughters of my native land, who faint at the thought of danger and frown in scorn at the word labour, hear this, and blush!—O, you may not dream of the intense enthusiasm pervading all; you must have lived on the spot, have had your feelings wrought to almost madness by outrage and oppression, beheld every heart around you glowing with one intense and glorious feeling,—and then you might speak and sneer, but till then be silent—dare not smile at or accuse the fervour of my words.

Among the throng that laboured at the walls, was one whose memory should not be all forgotten. He was a poor artisan of Warsaw, whose father had been murdered in the horrid massacre under Suwarrow. Day and night, without intermission, he laboured at the works, which he thought would keep out the banded ruffians from the homes of his kindred. He took no pause nor rest, and the immense labour he accomplished was almost incredible. I worked by his side, but he never would accompany me home at night, and every day I marked the fever burn keener in his eyes. Nothing would induce him to desist, and one morning we found him a corse, resting on the spade he still continued to grasp, and by his side was a scroll, containing his last request, that his body might be imbedded in the wall; thus even in death to assist in the defence of the capital. It was complied with—and soon the Russian balls, playing against his tomb, that crowned the rampart, were destined to start his spirit from its hallowed sleep.

Such was the fervour with which the Poles awaited the armies of Russia, that were advancing in deep concentrated bodies along the entire frontier, like a vast wave coming to engulph the land;—two hundred thousand men, with four hundred cannon, bore surging and thundering down on one devoted spot.

KARL.

TALES OF THE PUMP-ROOM.

No. III.

A LADY'S ASCENT OF MONT BLANC.

'Now, by the world, it is a lusty wench!
O let me see thee walk! thou dost not halt!'

SHAKSPEARE.

I AM not aware that, in a country where female courage and female pedestrianism are so highly appreciated and cultivated as in England, any authentic account has yet appeared of an event so creditable to both, and so unique in itself, as the successful ascent *by a lady* of the summit of Mont Blanc, and feel little doubt that its stirring narration will find favour in the eyes of my fair countrywomen. Nor will it be perused with the less interest, (in an age when national prejudices and rivalries are happily laid aside,) that the achievement should have been reserved for a daughter of France—a land whose habits, less favourable to out-door exercise, only enhance the energy and facility with which one among its privileged classes undertook and completed her formidable task, especially when it is remembered, as a salvo to any lurking jealousy, that but for the alleged im-

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practicability of the ascent for females, (the famous Marie du Mont Blanc having been carried during its latter and more arduous stages by the guide to whom she was betrothed,) two English ladies would have preceded in the honours of the adventure, though perhaps not in its auspicious results, the fortunate Mademoiselle D'Angeville. These adventurous pedestrians, a mother and daughter, had previously vindicated the character for daring of their country, by penetrating over the *Col du Géant* into the *Allée Blanche* in Piedmont, an expedition which only enhanced their longing to add to it an ascent of Mont Blanc.

This premised, we must turn to her for whom was reserved the honour of its accomplishment, and whom the lucky chance which sent me at the same time to Chamouni enables me, for the edification of my fair friends, accurately to describe. Mademoiselle D'Angeville, our heroine, as she may well be called with more than usual appropriateness, was born and brought up at a chateau near St. Lambert, in the department of the Aire, at the foot of the western range of the Jura, and surrounded by pile on pile of rugged and nearly inaccessible mountains, amid which she early accustomed herself to make excursions, having on one occasion performed on foot, in four days, a distance of sixty French leagues.

This might have seemed incredible to those who looked only on her slight figure and small delicate foot, had not an unusual degree of vivacity in her eye, and determination in her general aspect, mingled with the frankness and energy of her conversation, given tokens of no ordinary character. She could, however, at no time of her life have been handsome, and was, at the period of her expedition, (in September, 1838,) two-and-forty years of age. She assured me that, for the last ten, ever since her first view, in all the glories of a glowing sunset, of the renowned Mont Blanc, she had experienced a daily-increasing desire to stand on its summit, a feeling which gave rise first to a protracted sojourn at Geneva, whence, as is well known, the mountain monarch and his satellites are seen to peculiar advantage; and then Mademoiselle D'Angeville, being far from wealthy, resorted to a system of strict economy, by which alone the large sum indispensable for the prosecution of her favourite project could be obtained. This being now completed, the present summer, she determined and felt convinced, should witness its realization.

It was about the 1st of September that Mademoiselle D'Angeville arrived from Geneva at Chamouni, at the Hotel de l' Union, where her intentions soon became known. Every one, not excepting the guides, united in dissuading her from her purpose, but, finding her resolute in it, arrangements were at length entered into by which the safety of so enterprising a damsel might be most effectually secured. She chose Joseph Coutet, who had already been seven times up the mountain, as the leader of her band, consisting of five other guides and two bearers, nine persons in all.

The garb adopted by her seemed well adapted to the adventurous exploit, and may be recorded for the benefit of future female pilgrims. Over a pair of strong pantaloons, she wore a woman's dress of thick woollen stuff, and a goat-skin mantle, similar to those of the senn mädchen (or dairy-maids) of the neighbouring châlets; on her head, a fur cap, coming well over the face, surmounted by a large straw hat; on her feet, large easy shoes and gaiters; and in her hand, the indispensable 'Alpine-stick,' or *bâton*, tipped with chamois horn.

The only part of the preliminary proceeding somewhat at variance with these sensible, matter-of-fact preparations, was the superfluous oration in which the fair pedestrian (a little addicted, like her countrywomen, to *belles phrases*,) reminded her well-behaved, nay, even scrupulously well-bred future comrades, of the decorum to be observed in words and behaviour towards a female companion, a hint to which the heightened colour and mutual looks of astonishment of the worthy guides formed the sole and appropriate answer. It will be seen, (as was facetiously remarked at the time by a sly old German doctor of the party at Chamouni,) that at the height of fifteen thousand feet above the Mediterranean, in presence of three kingdoms, and some dozen republics, this slight touch of prudery and pedantry had insensibly evaporated.

Lest, however, the tinge of the ludicrous shed by this characteristic trait over the real perils of the enterprise should mislead any one as to the serious light in which they are viewed by those best qualified to judge, it may be well to preface the corresponding graphic narrative of a young countryman of my own, (by the successive steps of which, as detailed by himself, I mean to enable my readers to judge of the too-lightly-passed-over difficulties attending the ascent of Mademoiselle D' Angeville,) with the sober earnestness of deportment observable the previous evening—his no less experienced guides—their unanimous request to be allowed a day to arrange their family concerns—their subdued though firm demeanour, and evident sense, though modified by habitual daring, of impending and perhaps deadly peril.

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It may also enhance the interest experienced in the travellers—whose arduous footsteps I intend as it were to pioneer, and trace the subsequent ones of our heroine—to learn that of the two Englishmen, who, with a Swedish artillery officer, ten guides, and six bearers, formed the band, the narrator, Mr. Atkins, was only nineteen, and an utter novice in mountain scrambling, and his countryman, Mr. Pidwell, (whose young wife was to be kept in happy ignorance of the design of the enterprise,) only three months married. Soon after four o'clock, a cloudy August morning, the party set forth, (after a night rendered sleepless by conflicting emotions,) amid the *sobering* accompaniments of having their names and designations registered, in the event of a possible catastrophe, and being attended beyond the village by the weeping wives and children of several of their hitherto untried guides.

The party marched in single file, the six men bearing the knapsacks—who, after a certain point, were to return to Chamouni—leading the way; six guides following; then the gentlemen; next four guides more; and the rear being brought up by five or six stout volunteers from the neighbouring peasantry. This formidable array of numbers, while it may seem to diminish the difficulties of a party so strongly constituted, will only serve, as these are detailed in the words of the youngest among them, to enhance the prowess of the solitary female pilgrim, to whom they were comparatively light.

'About a German mile (or "stund," five English,) from the village,' says Mr. Atkins, 'began our ascent, which continued for a couple more, and brought us to a small châlet, where the herdsmen seek refuge from the fury of the storm. Thence a narrow goat-track winds right alongside of a frightful precipice, with a perpendicular rock in front. This was my first serious trial—but, thank God, my presence of mind did not fail, and I could gaze without dizziness into the depths of the abyss. Next came the crossing of the formidable mountain torrent, called "Mimont," to get over which it is necessary to take a flying leap, whose only landing-place is a pointed rock right in the middle of the stream, which boils and foams at an unknown depth on either side, while the slippery, insecure nature of the footing itself, greatly enhances the danger. I planted my staff, however, securely among the rocks, and swung myself, without accident, happily across.

'Some very steep rocks had now to be clambered over before we reached, towards eleven o'clock, the "Pierre de l' Echelle," where we rested an hour and breakfasted. This rock, twenty feet high by forty broad, lies right under the "Aiguille du Midi," and from it the view is extremely fine, embracing the whole range of the Jura, a great part of Savoy, and at its foot the valley of Chamouni. The vegetation in its vicinity is abundant, consisting of rhododendron in flowery profusion, and a yet more welcome plant, called in the *patois* of the country "Bellosen," resembling myrtle, and bearing black berries extremely pleasant and refreshing.

'On our left rushed the streams from the "Glacier de Bossons," to which every step brought us nearer; and as we advanced, a huge block of granite, which we had just trod on, fell thundering down behind us, waking a lengthened echo from the thousand peaks and needles amid which we were scrambling. I took advantage of a slight halt to sketch our line of march, not forgetting Michael Balmét's little dog, which accompanied us the whole way, being the first of his race that ever reached the summit of Mont Blanc. It was pretty to see how this small and apparently weak animal jumped like a chamois over the rocks, in the track pointed out to it by its experienced master.

'In about half an hour we came to the first dangerous cleft in the Glacier de Bossons. The narrow crystal valley may here be about an English mile long, intersected in every direction by frightful fissures, many of them four hundred feet deep. The renowned "Mer de Glace" of Chamouni seems as nothing, compared with a scene where everything (dangers included) is on a gigantic scale. Here our six bearers took leave of us, not without a moment of painful emotion on both sides. The voices of these strong and brave men, accustomed to perils from their youth, faltered as, bidding us in few words farewell, they shook us by the hand, and wended their way back to the village. I had hitherto kept always between David Folliquet and Michael Balmét. The former now squeezed my hand, in token, as he said, of friendship, and adding, "Henceforward, young gentleman, your only safety will lie in unlimited confidence in me," relapsed into a silence, which, communicative as the guides are on all ordinary occasions, always marks their sense of dangers which can only be surmounted by entire self-possession.

'One might indite a volume on the splendour, majesty, and beauty of the "Glacier de Bossons," were it practicable to dwell on and enjoy them at leisure. This, however, cannot be done, for who could adequately describe when springing for very life across foaming and thundering torrents, or scaling, in footsteps hewn by the guides, some perpendicular wall of ice, or leaping across a yawning

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chasm on a frail ledge of snow, which a moment will suffice to make disappear with its human burden?—even the diamond obelisks, temples and grottos, formed by the fantastically piled rocks of crystal, often rising singly like huge pillars from the mass, festooned in every imaginable form of grace with canopies and draperies of ice of every rainbow hue, and realizing in their wildest exuberance the dreams of poetic fancy in the creation of its glacier spirits and ondines. To linger even a moment amid such perilous beauties would be gaining little and risking much. All must be hastily glanced at with the mind firmly braced, and the nerves strung for vigorous exertion, lest the delay of even a few minutes should involve a faintness, depression, and indisposition for further effort, which, on the threshold of so hazardous an undertaking, would prove fatal to its accomplishment.

'My favourite place in the line of march was generally the rear, which had its advantages and disadvantages. Of course the former lay in the benefit of treading in the footsteps hewn and beaten by the previous pilgrims; but this was counterbalanced by finding the snow bridges, already crossed by the weight of twelve men, often in a most treacherous condition. My Swedish and English comrades made the better pioneers, from having already had experience in scrambling among the mountains of Norway; the former, nevertheless, had a narrow escape, from his foot slipping while springing across a chasm, when, but for his self-possession in firmly planting his staff, and hanging on by it till assistance came, he must inevitably have perished.

'I had a still worse adventure in crossing a similar fissure, the opposite brink of which was considerably higher than that from whence the leap had to be taken, while the footstep cut in the latter by the guides, and used by my predecessors, had sunk proportionably, and, just as I was standing on it, fairly gave way. To the latest day of my life I shall never forget what I felt while all but engulphed in a two-hundred-feet deep chasm, which, as it yearned to receive me, displayed horrid rows of sharp and serrated icy teeth, on which it might have been my fate to lie mangled, without perhaps being killed outright. My last hour I certainly thought was come, and so it would have been, had not Folliquet, throwing a rope hastily round him, sprang, at the risk of his life, like lightning to my side, and seizing me by the collar, swung me, as his giant strength alone enabled him to do, fairly across the abyss.

'Thenceforward I was attached by a rope to my faithful precursor, who indeed would scarcely, when practicable, be induced to quit hold of my hand. Sometimes, however, we had to scramble, as we best might, up slender ladders, along icy ramparts, from whose summits, pinnacles, sharp as the sword of Damocles, hung suspended over our heads, which a word might suffice to dislodge. We forgot the danger, however, in the inexpressible magnificence of the scene, whose transparent halls, and domes, and galleries, and pyramids, the noon-day sun was illuminating with a thousand rainbow tints. Sometimes our path lay amid depths sacred to the haunts of the glacier and mountain elves alone, hemmed in on every side by caves of unexplored extent and ramifications, or surrounded by the more changeful aspect of countless crystal palaces, displaying many an order of fantastic architecture undreamt of by ancients and moderns, and lit up by fairy hues more unimaginable still, from the "purest ray serene" of the diamond to depths of green and azure elsewhere utterly unknown.

'I found it now high time to defend my eyes with dark spectacles, and put on the green veil with which I had been provided. We next prepared to scale a thirty-feet wall, having reached the foot of the "Grands Mulets," or a group of steep, almost perpendicular rocks, rising in solitary grandeur like a beacon tower from the surrounding icy sea.

'Between the glacier and the rocks there lies a deep gully, across which we had to scramble or swing ourselves. Climbing the rocks themselves is a service of especial danger, rendered not less so in our case by the very *mal-à-propos* running in between our legs of the little dog; while the crumbling nature of the materials, long exposed to weather in so stormy a latitude, increases the difficulty. About midway up we caught another glimpse of Chamouni, where friends with telescopes were watching our progress; while another party, to gain a fuller view of almost every step of it, had stationed themselves on "Mont Breven" right opposite to Mont Blanc, whence they communicated by signals with those interested in the village; chiefly on account of my countryman's young bride, from whom it had been impossible to conceal her husband's expedition, and who was proportionately uneasy about its result.

'After climbing to the height of about three hundred feet the path turns to the right, to the spot where the night is usually passed. We reached it at about half-past four; and my first anxiety was to find water, being excessively thirsty. One of the guides and myself, however, sought long for any in vain, and I had to endure my thirst for a quarter of an hour longer, which the sun, having yet some warmth, sufficed to melt snow for a

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draught, the wine which the guides drank proving too strong for my purpose.

'The sky, at this elevation of nine thousand five hundred feet above the sea, was of the deepest blue, and the sun shed its rays with a golden brilliancy unknown in lower regions. Light fleecy clouds skirted the horizon, and robbed us of the view of Chamouni, but before us lay stretched the Lake of Geneva like a silver thread, the whole chain of the Jura, and the distant plains of France beyond; while near, the eye could take in the entire extent of Switzerland over the "diminished heads" of the intervening mountains of Buet and the Môle.

'This spot, now the usual sleeping place for travellers, was not originally deemed tenable; and Saussure passed the night about five hundred feet higher on the snowy plain, in which his guides dug a hole scarcely two feet deep, stretching over it a blanket, on whose edges they piled snow to keep it down. One advantage, however, of this scanty bivouac was, that th philosopher suffered so little from the cold as to be frequently during the night obliged to creep out of his lair in quest of air.

'Nor are pilgrims at the Grands Mulets much better off for elbow-room, the whole extent of the level space being ten or twelve feet long by four broad, bounded on three sides by a three-hundred-feet precipice, and flanked by a perpendicular rock. Against this the guides laid seven of their staves in a sloping position as a support to a blanket-tent, whose interior afforded a breadth of about four feet for the travellers to pack into and sleep as best they might.

'These arrangements completed, the party dined, the ear and eye gratified, from their securely isolated position, with the sound and sight of innumerable avalanches, and the spectacle of a magnificent sunset behind the Jura. Seven of the party then sought shelter beneath the tent, while the remaining guides, after joining in their evening hymn, ensconced themselves, to avoid the cold, (five degrees below freezing of Reaumur,) in clefts of the adjoining rocks.'

The foregoing details, rendered probably more minute and graphic by the narrator being a novice in mountain expeditions, have been given less for their intrinsic merits, as a faithful and satisfactory sketch of an often-recounted enterprise, than to place before their reader, step by step, the difficulties and dangers—happily, nay, almost without admission of their extent or existence—surmounted by the *female* pilgrim, whose success it is the object of this article to commemorate.

'Without difficulty, nay, almost without inconvenience,' says *her* chronicler, 'did this bold mountain traveller traverse the torrent of Mimont, climb the rocks of Pierre de l'Echelle, cross the formidable Glacier de Bossons, and scale the obelisk-like peaks of the "Grands Mulets," whence, as *souvenirs* of the spot, she wrote little notes to various of her friends. She was unable, though in perfect health, to sleep; but enjoyed throughout the most brilliant moonlight night the magnificent prospect of the towering snowy peaks above and the boundless icy sea beneath, the magical effect of which was heightened ever and anon by the rushing and thundering of avalanches from the overhanging "Dent du Midi."

'Having remarked, while gazing around her, that Mermier, one of her guides, had chosen for his night's quarters a rocky ridge, so narrow that his legs dangled on either side over an unfathomable abyss, into which the slightest motion threatened to precipitate him, she awoke him, and was amused with the stare of astonishment with which he assured her he should be thankful, if in all his mountain expeditions he could fall in with so good bed.

'At three o'clock the party were once more astir, and the guides breakfasted heartily; but Mademoiselle d'Angeville felt no hunger, and contented herself with five dried prunes, and some snow, which frugal meal sufficed her from Chamouni to the summit of Mont Blanc, when her appetite first returned. During the guides' meal she retired into the tent, and doffing her cumbersome feminine garments, reappeared for the arduous residue of the journey in male attire.'

This reminds us of her male precursors, to whose journal we must now recur, for particulars equally applicable to her own ascent, though passed lightly over in her case (as previously given in theirs) by the compiler of both narratives.

At two in the morning, the light slumbers of such among them as could snatch a little repose, (the chief obstacle, by the way, to which, with one of the English gentlemen, was the singular annoyance, at ten thousand feet above the sea, and amid perpetual snow, of *bugs*,) were pleasingly broken by the guides' morning hymn, and their exhortation to avail themselves of the bright moonlight which shone clear as day amid the mountains, while all in the valley seemed buried in clouds and shadow. Less abstemious than their female rival, the gentlemen discussed a frozen fowl, and then set forward on their journey, bidding adieu to a couple of peasant volunteers, whose curiosity was not strong enough to carry them any farther.

'With spirits refreshed,' says our young

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countryman, 'we scrambled—no easy task—down from our rocky bivouac, and crossed with unusual facility the glacier of Tacernaz, in consequence of the snow being hard enough to bear us. From thence our march led always to the right, toward the Dome du Gouté; and our next difficulty lay in scaling the "Petites Montées," a wall some seventy feet high, but looking more like three hundred, so completely are relative dimensions confounded amid the higher Alps The rocks are nearly perpendicular, and it took us nearly three quarters of an hour to climb them, when we reached the Petit Plateau, whose clefts, though of rarer occurrence, are formidably wide. We managed to cross them, however, on temporary bridges of various sorts, some of snow drifts merely, others of the debris of late avalanches.

'As the day advanced, these ice and snow bridges became fearfully insecure, and required the most wary walking; nor did any of us henceforth attempt them without being attached by a rope to the guide who preceded, and cautiously sounding with his long staff at every step he moved. We next arrived at the foot of the "Grandes Montées," which in an hour's time of excessive exertion we surmounted, and at a quarter past six reached the "Grand Plateau," a wide dismal snowy plain, eleven thousand feet above the sea, from which rise in every direction the most savage and awful icy peaks. Here we halted to breakfast, and the guides produced from their knapsacks more frozen fowls, frozen bread, and, stranger still, frozen wine! We thought it all, however, mighty good, although we had no small trouble in thawing our eatables, and holding the frozen wine *morsels* long enough in our mouths.

'We soon found, in spite of these refreshments, that we must not prolong our halt, if we would escape the misfortune of frost-bitten feet, which befell our predecessor Count Tilly. At the expiration of twenty minutes we were again off, taking the path towards the "Petits Mulets," and leaving the "Rochers rouges" to the left. Here the summit of the mountain appeared to rise above our heads to about a thousand feet, whereas in reality it was, alas! more than three thousand.

'From the Grand Plateau we turned toward the "Mont Maudit," one of the most easterly pinnacles of Mont Blanc; and from this spot our dangers and difficulties every moment increased. Our path lay for long on the brink of a fearful precipice, down which one false step would have sufficed to plunge us; and this too precisely on the spot most liable to avalanches, in which the utterance of a single syllable was prohibited by the guides—a rash word, or the casual flight of the tiniest bird, sufficing to detach a mass capable of annihilating the whole party. In this immediate neighbourhood occurred the similar catastrophe, by which three of the unfortunate guides of Dr. Hanmel were overtaken, and swept into the abyss, in 1820; and one of our present attendants, Julien Duvaoussour, who, also hurried away by the same avalanche, owed his escape to its diminished velocity, which enabled him, he yet scarce knows how, to extricate himself from it, pointed out, with a silence more significant than words, the spot where his three unhappy comrades had now for seventeen years lain imbedded in their icy sepulchre. Silently and with heavy hearts did we too turn from the fearful chasm, in which, a few minutes later, a lawine which rushed from the Dome du Gouté upon our very track, would have sent us to join them. This danger we escaped, as if by miracle, on a second occasion.

'To reach the "Petits Mulets" in a right line being impossible, we had to follow a zigzag course, each treading warily in the footsteps of our pioneers, who again felt their way with their staves. These precautions might secure us against falling, but avalanches could only be averted from our heads by a higher power. Now ever since we had left the Grand Plateau for the "Petits Mulets," and formidable "Mur de la Côte," my troubles had fairly begun; and even while crossing the former, I had with the utmost difficulty kept in view my companions; who, on arriving at the latter, awaited my approach, that we might all keep together again when the climbing began. At this very instant a huge avalanche from the Dome du Gouté swept over and obliterated the narrow footpath we should, but for this providential halt, have been pursuing, and from whence we could not have failed to be all hurled, by a catastrophe, of whose ravages we, on our return, shuddered to view the effects, in the entire demolition of the unlucky path.

'I now walked—if walking such involuntary locomotion could be called—between Folliquet and the younger Coutet; but was forced to stop every ten steps to take breath, and allow my weary limbs to recruit a little strength. Not only did I suffer cruelly from thirst, but felt thoroughly exhausted and knocked up. From time to time I refreshed my parched mouth with a little vinegar, while my nose kept bleeding continually. Even the guides began to suffer great uneasiness, and Folliquet could no longer carry his head upright. Some of our advanced guard swayed from right to left, some staggered and fell at every other step. One man even lay stretched out senseless at the foot of the "Mur de la Côte;" but such was my present state of

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exhaustion, that deeply as at any other time I should have felt interested about him, I never even asked who he was. The little dog too became strangely affected, and gazed about him with evident anxiety and astonishment. Even at the Grand Plateau he had struggled manfully with drowsiness, now creeping, at every momentary halt, to gather warmth among our feet, now rousing himself up for an effort at running, and then every minute tumbling down done up. One only advantage he had over his master, and that was his unfailing appetite; for the remaining bones of the fowls were no sooner thrown to him than they disappeared, and he either felt no thirst, or quenched it as he ran with snow.

'As I lay in this painful condition, more dead than alive, one of the guides, named Cupellin, came running past me towards the front, calling out "Courage, courage, Monsieur! nous serons là haut bientôt!" from which I gathered but slender encouragement, knowing pretty well what "presently" meant in these good people's language, and that we had before us an almost perpendicular wall of snow; when forced to halt a moment in ascending which, we were fain to cling to it with both hands and feet, nay, to rest our very heads on it for safety. Yet I suffered less here than on the Petits Mulets, as I could refresh myself now and then with snow, during the fifty minutes it cost us to surmount this wall of about two hundred and fifty feet in height. From my increasing exhaustion, I had pretty nearly given up all hopes of reaching the summit, seeing alps upon alps yet towering beyond each other; but an opportune snow-plain, which now occurred, afforded me means of breathing, and even of making up to my companions, neither of whom, as they assured me, experienced any inconvenience from the rarity of the atmosphere. This was the first time, since our breakfast together at the Grand Plateau, that I had exchanged words with them, each having enough to do with his own progress and safety. At ten thousand feet above the sea I fear all men must plead guilty to selfishness, however little addicted to it in less elevated regions.

'After twenty minutes' halt to take breath, we set off in marching order to face the final ascent of about one hundred and fifty feet which lay between us and our goal. The air had now become so rarified, that nearly all the party were compelled to lean forward almost double, to be able to draw breath at all. Our Swedish friend, however, less affected, had availed himself of it to make a run forward, and if possible be first on the summit, for which he had nearly paid dear; for he soon fell utterly exhausted on the snow, where he was seized with pains in the limbs, the effects of which he felt long afterwards. The snow here was thoroughly pulverized, and now and then we had to summon our sinking energies to leap across suspicious openings, concealing no doubt in their depths unfathomable crevices. Having to stand still every two minutes during this last ascent, it took us a good hour and incredible exertions to reach, at half-past nine on Wednesday, the 23d of August, eight hours after leaving our night's quarters at the "Grands Mulets," the summit of Mont Blanc. We wished each other mutually joy, and all sought at first the southern face of the mountain, as being a degree less cold than the northern, by which we had come up. As for me, I was so exhausted and knocked up, that I rolled myself in a blanket, and I lay for near half an hour with my head on the knee of one of the guides in a half sleeping, half fainting condition. As soon as I could muster strength, I turned with two of our cicerones in the direction of the Apennines. Hedzengen instinctively turned his face north towards his far country, and Pidwell gazed westward. Each of us felt an inward whisper that at such a moment he was best alone.'

So far we have given our young countryman's story in his own words, but before comparing notes, as to the result of their aerial observations, between the two parties we have been simultaneously accompanying, courtesy demands that we should see the lady safe landed at her journey's end. And it must, we fear, have afforded a degree of secret satisfaction to those male competitors, whom she continued up to an advanced period of it not only to outdo, (surmounting gaily and lightly, to the astonishment of her guides, the formidable stages of the Petites and Grandes Montées, and Petit and Grand Plateau,) but actually to laugh to scorn, expressing her surprise that *men* should have adopted so many needless precautions, and submitted to be bound to their guides by ropes—that this undaunted mountain heroine at length yielded to the lot of mortality, and gave tokens of excessive fatigue. To our young countryman individually it may have been a solace to learn that he and the lady became *hors de combat* at the same precise point of their labours, viz. the Petits Mulets; though it was not until reaching the Mur de la Côte, the formidable icy wall before described, rising at an angle of some eighty or eighty-two degrees, that she, as well as the majority of her guides, nearly gave in, and but for their leader Coutet, who manfully held out, and cut steps for her and his fellows in the ice, the expedition must have been given up.

The once bold and stalwart female traveller

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now felt, in addition to her bodily fatigue, such mental depression, from a sensation of tightness across the chest, and as it were molten lead rushing through the veins, that she herself assured Dr. Muller she had to rouse all her remaining energies to summon resolution to proceed; while she never alluded to this painful moment but by the significant title of her 'agony.' She was now fain to submit to be attached by a rope to her faithful old guide, and on one of the many occasions when she had sank beside him, in too great exhaustion to be able to articulate, she heard him exclaim, 'No! never again will I take a *woman* up Mont Blanc!'

Having playfully reproached him, at a later period, for this ungallant speech, Coutet replied that her situation had appeared to him so very alarming from the frightful tension of her nerves and muscles, and the expression of her features so much resembled those of a dying person, that he every minute expected to see her fall down dead on the snow beside him. Happily, her strength returned in a sufficient degree to enable her, by his powerful help, to drag herself at length to the summit of the mountain, and of her long-cherished hopes, on Thursday, the 4th September, at fifty-five minutes past noon.

From the very moment that Mademoiselle D'Angeville inhaled the air of this privileged spot, she felt, contrary to the experience of almost every previous traveller, strengthened and refreshed; and not only free from indisposition, but light, active, and exhilarated in body and mind. Nor was this the only metamorphosis achieved by the elevation; for the prudery we had seen displayed by the lady before quitting the valley, gave place to the most natural and winning frankness: and when old Coutet claimed his well-earned privilege of a kiss, it was accorded with the utmost good-nature and readiness. So that, in addition to the meteorological observations of Saussure, (perhaps the only one which the lapse of fifty-two years has afforded,) may now be registered, viz. the influence of the most elevated spot in Europe in modifying the female temperament and character.

The courtesy of his fair charge awoke in the old guide such a corresponding spirit of chivalrous gallantry, that exclaiming, 'We must have Mademoiselle *higher* than Mont Blanc, which is what no one before her has ever been able to boast!' he gave a signal to his comrades, and the lady was raised, by their joint efforts, shoulder high from the ground. After this supplementary ascent, the refreshments were unpacked, and the female traveller gave tokens of having found her appetite where the generality of her predecessors lost theirs. She ate most heartily, and quaffed, as a loyal Frenchwoman, a glass of champagne to the health of the infant Count of Paris. Immediately after, she continued her aerial correspondence, having written from hence four or five little notes to her relations in Geneva and its neighbourhood, with a dash, if we may venture to say so, of the same vanity which caused Napoleon to dictate decrees from the Kremlin at Moscow. She was soon, however, reminded of the necessity of closing her correspondence, as little enough time would be allowed her for the more interesting and necessary employment of surveying, under the serenest and most favourable sky, perhaps, ever traveller was favoured with, an extent of prospect vouchsafed to few, if any, previous pilgrims to Mont Blanc.

As, however, her immediate precursor seems to have been equally fortunate, and is, as usual, more detailed in his description of the views enjoyed by himself and party, it may be well to revert to his journal for the several features of the panorama as successively pointed out to him by his guide, and noted on the spot.

'I took,' says he, 'my note-book in my hand, and requested Julien Devouassour to name, one by one, the various objects by which we were surrounded. He began his enumeration with Piedmont, the whole north of Italy, Monte Viso, the Maritime and Cottian Alps; then followed the valley of the Isere, the plains of Lombardy and Milan. Further east, he indicated a point which he called Venice, which, however, I took the liberty of doubting; at all events, it showed but as a black speck on the indistinctly seen shores of the Adriatic, while cities without number dotted the intervening plain. In the distance, we had next the Alps of the Tyrol and of Carinthia; and nearer us, the huge mountain group of St. Gothard, the Alps of Glaciers, and the Glaciers of Alitsch; the lofty pyramids of the towering Bernese Alps, the Jungfrau, the Gemmi, the Schuckhorn, Wetterhorn, and Finster-aarhorn; and coming round again towards the south, the peak of Mont Rosa, only one hundred feet lower than that on which we stood, with the range of the Pennine Alps, and their several pinnacles, Mont Cervin, La Dent Blanche, Monts Combin and Velan. In the nearer foreground lay the Mer de Glace with its ramifications, the Jardin, and the Grand St. Bernard; on the right hand the little St. Bernard, the Allée Blanche, and the valleys of Aosta and Commayeur. Quite at our feet lay a little mound of stones, beside which ran a silver thread; this was Chamouni, with the river Arve; and stretching in front of us, I could distinctly see the whole line of the Jura, the lake of Geneva in its extent, and beyond both a large por-

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tion of France, including Lyons and the Porte du Rhone.

'I was absorbed in the contemplation of this majestic prospect,' (of which, be it here remarked, Mademoiselle D'Angeville caught all the features here enumerated, with the exception of any, even the remotest peep of Venice or Milan,) continues our countryman, 'when Folliquet came suddenly behind me, and asked if I would not drink a glass of champagne? I joyfully assented, being half frozen with cold, and putting up my note-book (in which I had found difficulty enough, from utter weariness, in making the above entries) rejoined the company, and pledged them to the health of our mutual friends in England and Sweden. No trio, perhaps, would have more heartily enjoyed, at some thousand feet or so of less elevation, a similar panorama; but the enjoyment was almost out of the question, so much did we all suffer from exhaustion, excessive pinching cold, and the retrospect of past, and anticipation of coming dangers. With the thermometer at seven degrees below zero of Reaumur, it will easily be believed that we were all satisfied with an hour and a quarter's sojourn on the summit of the far-famed and hitherto successfully invaded Mont Blanc.'

The lady again, though happily exempted from all the varieties of suffering that 'flesh' had in others 'been heir to' on the same spot —such as exhaustion, drowsiness, bleeding at the nose, blindness or difficulty of breathing,—felt even her sketching powers overcome by a cold, exceeding by one degree of Reaumur (her ascent was ten days later in the season) that experienced by the gentlemen, and found fifty minutes on the summit quite enough. 'The meteorological influence of the elevation she had reached,' adds her sly biographer, 'still so far prevailed as to allow her to abridge, in a great measure, the toils of her descent, by sliding down the inclined planes of snow in the manner termed "ramasser," in which the traveller seated, as if in a sledge, behind the steering guide, who takes hold of him by the feet, is dragged in an incredibly short time over ground, the ascent of which cost them both hours of labour and fatigue. Not half an hour had elapsed since Mademoiselle D'Angeville left the summit, when the mountain wrapt its majestic head in a veil of impenetrable clouds, which for eight following days it perseveringly kept on; a phenomenon which the residents of Chamouni, whose plans it sadly disconcerted, interpreted—according as gallantry or disappointment dictated—into grief for the departure of its first lady visitor, or vexation at the disenchantment, by her unvarnished narration, of many of its vague and mysterious terms. Be this as it may, it was long ere the spirit of the mountain recovered his good humour.'

We need not follow in detail the descent of either party—though that of the gentlemen, rather ominously preceded by a violent gust of wind whirling our young friend's hat down a precipice, where, considering that the whole summit is but a space of a few feet, the owner might have very easily followed it, seems to have again presented more difficulties than occurred in that of the conquering heroine; chiefly from the enlargement by the noon-day heat of the several crevices, from being engulfed by one of which Mr. Atkins was only saved by the presence of mind of his invaluable guide. In one respect only the male party proved and asserted their superior prowess—for they proceeded without halting for the night at the Grands Mulets, which the fatigue of the lady rendered necessary—the same evening to Chamouni. They were destined, however, to be still in some degree shamed by female courage and enterprise; as at Pierre Pointue, a spot more easy of access, it might be thought, for goats than mountain maidens, an agreeable contrast to all the previous horrors of the journey presented itself in the shape of one of the latter, (the daughter of one of the three guides,) who stood awaiting them with the welcome refreshment of fresh bread, milk, and honey. Over these our young friend seems to have lingered longer than suited the impatience of his married comrade and some others of the party to rejoin their anxious families. They therefore pushed on, leaving him with three guides, to finish at leisure the remainder of a pilgrimage inexpressibly cheering to him, he adds, after long wandering in the regions of storm and perils and horhors, by the sight first of châlets, at whose doors stood neatly-clad relations of the guides, assembled to welcome and congratulate them, and then of herds and flocks, green meadows and cheerful dwellings, and all the charms of rural and pastoral life.

At the foot of the last descent he encountered the pleasing vision of a young lady on horseback, (attended by her brother on foot,) who, on meeting this wearied traveller, sprang courteously from her steed and pressed it upon him; an offer of which he was too young a soldier to avail himself. Not so, however, his trusty conductor Folliquet, who, on the offer being extended to him, jumped at once and *sans cérémonie* into the saddle, to the secret envy and regret of his more polished master. He was, however, almost immediately consoled, and compensated for his gallantry, by an envoy from his host of the 'Crown,' leading for his use the best mule

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in his stables, decked up for the occasion with flowers. In this triumphal guise, he made his entry, alongside of the courteous damsel, into Chamouni, the street of which was nearly blocked up by crowds of his own countrymen, and of natives, all heartily congratulating him on being the youngest traveller by whom the ascent of Mont Blanc had ever been attempted or achieved.

The return of the first lady from a similar expedition, it may easily be supposed, was hailed with louder and more general demonstrations of interest; and any one aware how essential is noise to such manifestations with the good Swiss and Savoyards, will be at no loss to imagine the popping of fire-arms and din of discordant music which signalized her triumphal entry; or her welcome as she resumed her seat at the *table d'hôte* of the Hôtel de l'Union.

Next day, however, it was her more welcome duty to preside at the customary feast given by her to her faithful guides; when she had for an interesting *vis-à-vis* at the opposite side of the table, her sole female rival, the once fair and blooming *Marie du Mont Blanc*, who, albeit no longer either, was yet hale and hearty, and under the influence of a cheerful glass gave full tokens of unextinguished spirit. Mademoiselle D'Angeville did the honours with the usual grace of her countrywomen, and returned in a few days to Geneva, where she gave notice of an intended publication, with accompanying sketches, of the interesting narrative, whose most striking features have been anticipated in the foregoing pages.

It may not be amiss to wind up this mingled 'yarn' of two successful ascents of Mont Blanc, with the verdict (pronounced too amid all the excitement of recent triumph, by a very juvenile moralist) of our countryman, as to their future inutility and very questionable character. Further advantages to science, or discoveries in geography, have been long out of the question; the charms of novelty and enterprise have well-nigh waned from an expedition in which more than one hundred men and two women have now participated; and it remains for the conscientious consideration of the wealthy and curious traveller, whether such considerable sums (the two adventures narrated having cost each of them near fifteen hundred francs) might not be more advantageously expended than in idly endangering his own life, or, if himself unconnected by ties which make it criminally selfish, in inducing half a dozen fathers of families, dependent on them for very existence, to share, perhaps, the fate of the three unfortunate guides above alluded to, who perished when accompanying the Russian Dr. Hanmel; a catastrophe indelibly impressed on the memory of the compiler of these pages, from having actually signed the recommendations (eagerly coveted by the juniors of the expedition) of more than one of the devoted sufferers—and not only having seen the departure in high spirits of the doomed party from Chamouni, but traced their progress with a telescope from Sallanche to within a few yards of the scene of their fatal disaster, which, but for the accidental, or rather merciful, withdrawal of his eye from the glass, it would have been his heart-rending lot to witness, without being able to discriminate, from a distance of fully twenty miles, whether its victims were the faithful men who had so lately proved his own trusty escorts, or the exulting and unconscious travellers (two of them his own countrymen) with whom he had the previous evening made light of the perils of the adventure—and who, but for providential change of position in the file, would not themselves have survived, sadly to renounce, and for ever to deplore, their luckless expedition.

THE BRIDE.

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

She is dress'd, she is ready—the orange-wreath now
Is entwining her beautiful maidenly brow;
And its white blossoms blend with her dark raven hair,
And her cheek is as pale—but a blush late was there.
Her young sisters are busy, her mother is still,
And her eyes the crush'd tears of affection distil,
As she looks on the treasure now leaving her heart;—
O! she never had dreamt 'twas such sadness to part!

He comes! with the light eager step love only lends,
O'er his heart's worshipp'd idol enamour'd he bends;
But the sob of her mother arrested his bliss;
And pity for her woe damp'd his first nuptial kiss.
He exclaim'd, 'O my mother! fear naught for thy child,
She shall smile when a bride, as her infancy smiled;
For no sorrow shall reach her when safe on my breast:
Then, thou bird of my bosom, come home to thy nest!'

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DEAF UNCLE JEFFERY AND THE LITTLE OLD MAID.

BY ABBOTT LEE.

NEVER was such a commotion known in the annals of domestic moppery and broomery and scrubberry and dustery. All good housewives know how to turn a house upside-down, and how to throw it out of the windows, and the dwelling into which we are about to introduce our readers was just in this agreeable predicament. The curtains were down and the carpets were up; the fires were out and the sweeps were in; the floors were wet and the cisterns were dry; everything was out of its place in the endeavour to put everything into it; and the whole household was in disorder whilst being put in order;—and all because an old uncle was coming.

All the little and the great Pokenhams were mustered, and marshalled, and drilled. Mrs. Pokenham took upon herself the office of drill-serjeant.

'Now girls, no quarrelling, no contradiction, no huffing, no scowling, no scuffling—your old uncle's coming. Now, boys, no fighting, and rollicking, and game-making—mind and put the best side out, and behave decently—your old uncle's coming. And now, where's Fanny Carr? She's always out of the way when she ought to be in it, and in it when she ought to be out of it. Can't any of you find me Fanny Carr? I want to give her some hints and orders, because my old uncle's coming.'

A little plain undersized old maid, somewhere about four feet four inches and a half in height, about six stone six pounds six ounces in weight, and a complexion something between saffron and stone-blue, and dressed in a garb of forgotten date, was presently poked out of a corner by the young Pokenhams.

'Fanny Carr,' said Mrs. Pokenham, 'have you done those few trifling things that I desired? Have you seen fresh linen put upon the best bed?'

'Yes, ma'am.'

'And have you cured the chimney board of rattling?'

'Yes, ma'am.'

'And the windows of shaking?'

'Yes, ma'am.'

'And did you see that the boot-jack and the slippers were placed ready to his feet?'

'Yes, ma'am.'

'And Mr. Pokenham's last new dressing-gown to his hands?'

'Yes, ma'am.'

'And did you see that the coffee was properly cleared?'

'Yes, ma'am.'

'And the chicken and bottle of wine all ready to be brought up?'

'Yes, ma'am.'

'You know my uncle's coming?'

'Has anybody told anybody that my uncle's coming?' asked Mrs. Pokenham.

'Not a soul of us!' exclaimed *omnes*.

'That's right. Why, if it were once known, we should have all the world and his wife here in less than no time. The Scudamores would be racketting and rollicking here, and Christopher and Kate mincing, and carneying, and blarneying, and they'd try with a witness, to get my old uncle from me.'

'They'd get a troublesome customer,' said Miss Pokenham the first.

'Yes, but one that I hope will pay well. Now, girls, if you dare to show any of your quizzings, and huffings, and black looks, you'll spoil all, and we shall lose all my old uncle's share in the Bank of England. As for you, Jane, if you fall into that old trick you have got of turning up your nose at everybody—and you, Margaret, of curling up your lip at everything—and you, boys, of badgering, and bantering, and worrying, why, we shall just be throwing away all uncle Jeff's Bank-stock and landed estates; and we may as well have them, for we have as much right to them as anybody else.'

'I wish you may get them,' said Master Daniel.

'Most rare Daniel!' said Master Humphrey; 'I wish I may.'

Thanks to the little sister of the primitive old maids, Fanny Carr, everything was at length in perfect readiness: the carpets were all down, and the curtains were all up; the floors were dry, and the fires were lit, the covers were stripped from the best chairs, the sofa wheeled to the best place, the fire was blazing in all the beauty of concavity, convexity, and contiguity, and every face arranged so as to look delighted at the arrival of tiresome, troublesome, cross, snappish old uncle Jeff. There came a sound of very brilliant blowing of horns; everybody strained their eyes; the Royal Blue flew past in grand style, the horses prancing and capering, and the guard making melody with a bugle horn; on it whirled and whirled, never stopping for anybody, and of course no uncle Jeff could be there, and so two tedious hours were spent in fidgetings and guessings; and then the slow coach was heard coming lumbering and trailing along, and it stopped at the steps of the respectable house where had been all the dusting and mopping and brushing

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and brooming, and a great masculine head, with thick heavy features, and bushy eyebrows, and large lips, poked itself out of the window, and looked up to the house in question, surveying its well-hearth-stoned step, and its clean windows, and the scarlet moreen curtains through them, and the brighter blaze of the cheerful fire glowing and flickering over the window-frames, with a most morose unpleasable look; whereupon Mrs. Pokenham, and all the tribe of Pokenhams, little and big, rushed out of the parlour into the hall, and out of the hall on to the door-steps, and Mrs. Pokenham began to delight her own benevolent heart by assuring herself and her uncle, and congratulating herself upon the information, that her dear, kind, good uncle Jeffery was really looking full twenty years younger than when she last saw him.

'Dear uncle Jeffery! how kind of you to come and see us! how delighted I am to receive you into the bosom of my affectionate family! My dear Mr. Pokenham will be as rejoiced to find you amongst us, and all my darling children have been so anxious to welcome you, that they could neither eat, drink, nor sleep, for thinking and talking about you. But pray take care of the steps—they are so slanting, and slippery, and dangerous—not that you are in the least infirm, but I myself had an awkward slip from them one day. Why, how well you are looking! you must be growing younger every day. I declare you look more juvenile than any of us. Daniel—Humphrey—call the servant to take your uncle's luggage. My dear uncle, I cannot think of such a thing as your carrying your own luggage. Daniel! Humphrey! call somebody. There, can't you take it yourselves? My dear uncle Jeffery, pray wait till a servant can come. Daniel! Humphrey! why don't you move?"

Daniel and Humphrey stood with their hands in their pockets staring very contemptuously as the cross-grained old gentleman took up a small hair trunk and a leather hatbox in his hands, and, under the running cannonade of Mrs. Pokenham's speech, proceeded to ascend the flight of steps, taking as little notice of the lady proprietress of the mansion as though he had heard her not, which supposititious case appeared to be pretty nearly the true one, as on their entrance into the parlour the morose old gentleman, laying his luggage very deliberately on the floor, proceeded to draw from the depths of his capacious pocket a very serious-looking ear-horn, which having adjusted to his ear, he turned a sour look upon Mrs. Pokenham, and for the first time opened his lips.

'Well, ma'am, I told you I'd come some time or other, and I'm here.'

Had all Mrs. Pokenham's energy and eloquence gone for nothing? Had it all been wasted on a deaf old man, who had not been able to hear a syllable of her mellifluous accents? was it all to do over again, and that too to the detriment of her lungs, at the top of her breath? Yes, seemingly so, and accordingly the poor hard-worked lady began again shouting as loud as possible.

'My dear uncle Jeffery, we are all delighted to see you, and looking so well—younger than ever.'

'Hey? what?'

'We are all so glad to see you! You are looking so well!' shouted Mrs. Pokenham, growing very red in the face.

'Do you think I look well then?' said the cross old gentleman.

'O charmingly. Twenty years younger than when I last saw you.'

'Hey! what?'

'You are looking so much younger than you did some time back. Nobody would believe that you were the same person. I am sorry, however, to see that you are rather dull of hearing.'

'Dull of what?' asked uncle Jeff.

'A little deaf,' shouted Mrs. Pokenham.

'Deaf! who says that I'm deaf? a set of stupid people. I should like to know who told you I was deaf! a parcel of ignorant people!'

'O, I see that it was all a mistake! only I thought that perhaps you had got a little cold—nothing more, nothing more,' shouted Mrs. Pokenham.

'I'm no more deaf than you are!' said the sour-visaged gentleman.

'No, no, uncle, I see that you are not. I don't know what I could be thinking of,' said poor Mrs. Pokenham, whose lungs began to complain at being put into such severe requisition. 'But now, uncle, take the easy chair—it is such an easy one—we got it on purpose for you.'

'I don't want your easy chairs! any chair is easy to a healthy man like me. What! I suppose you think I am getting old?'

'O no, dear uncle Jeffery; you look full twenty years younger than when I saw you last. Here, Fanny Carr, do take these slippers and this dressing-gown away. I don't know who could have thought of treating my dear uncle Jeffery as if he were old or invalided. Pray, Fanny Carr, do move this footstool, and wheel this great unwieldy chair away.'

The little old maid drew near much as if she had been a little mouse approaching a lion, and proceeded to do as she was bid with one of the most frightened airs in the world. The great cross man looked down like a

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colossal statue on the diminutive little thing who was thus called upon to wait upon his high mightiness.

'Won't you go near the fire, uncle Jeffery? it was made on purpose for you: we thought you might be cold,' shouted Mrs. Pokenham.

'Cold!' sneered uncle Jeff, unbuttoning his coat.

'Do open the window, Fanny Carr, my uncle Jeffery will be suffocated.'

'I wish you'd let the window be—and me too,' growled uncle Jeff.

'And now, uncle Jeffery, will you take tea or coffee? we have them both ready.'

'Do you think I'm a tee-totaller? I hate slops!'

'Uncle Jeffery shall have a rump-steak and oyster sauce. Would you like that?' shrieked Mrs. Pokenham.

'I don't like to be plagued!' growled uncle Jeff.

Poor Mrs. Pokenham sat down in her chair, pretty considerably exhausted with shouting, and proceeded to lament herself and console herself in a low voice, perfectly comfortable in uncle Jeff not being able to hear her, in spite of his assurances that he was by no manner of means deaf.

'Well, and so he's deaf! deaf as a door-nail! and how in the world I am to go on making myself agreeable I don't know—I shall soon be perfectly exhausted. And yet there is one little comfort in it—we need not be so very particular what we say. One may be able to express our sentiments, without being constantly in danger of stumbling over some affront or another.'

'Mamma,' said Miss Pokenham the eldest, 'I suppose we may speak, too, as uncle Jeff is too deaf to hear a word that we can say.'

'Say what you will, only don't look towards him, lest he suspect that we are speaking of him.'

'I was only going to give you my opinion of this new relation of ours; why, mamma, he is amazingly ugly.'

'What of that?' said Mrs. Pokenham, 'he is as rich as a Jew.'

'Did you ever see such thick lips—such a thick nose—and such a thick head?' said Miss Pokenham the second.

'Don't make me laugh,' said Miss Pokenham the first, 'or else our deaf uncle Jeff will think I am laughing at him.'

'What are you talking about?' asked uncle Jeff, placing his ear-horn ready for the answer.

'They were talking, girl-like, uncle Jeffery,' shouted poor Mrs. Pokenham, 'of you. You know that is so natural; and they were saying—but you must excuse them—what a fine looking man you are!'

'La, ma, how can you say so; I never saw anybody much uglier in my life, and then for expression! why he could certainly make vinegar with a look.'

'Hey? what?' said uncle Jeff.

'Margaret was only saying that you have such a powerful expression. *Now, boys, if you begin to titter, I'll turn you out of the room.*'

'How mamma is sweetening up deaf uncle Jeff! Mamma, I had better help you to a little more, since it answers so well. Look how he is staring at us with his goggle eyes.'

'Hey? what?' asked uncle Jeffery, turning again to Mrs. Pokenham.

'Jane was only saying, that you had such peculiarly fine eyes. *Girls, will you have done!*'

'No, mamma, it is too good fun—we must have a little more of it. Don't you see how deaf uncle Jeff is looking at us, and how red he is getting in the face? His complexion and visage would do very well for a sign-post at some village inn.'

'Hey? what?' interrogated uncle Jeff.

'Margaret was observing how fresh-complexioned you are, uncle Jeffery, and what a fine portrait you would make. *Humphrey, go out of the room. Daniel, be quiet. Girls, girls! how dare you say such things before his face? I declare I sit in fear and trembling.*'

'La, mamma, one may say what one likes—it's all safe enough. Uncle Jeff is too deaf to hear, never fear. Besides, it does him good to hear you interpret for us. You turn our sour into sweet, and he seems to like the flavour. Better give him a little more.'

'Feeding time is not over. Give him a little more,' said Humphrey.

'How can I keep my countenance, if you go on so? Boys, be quiet.'

'It is so amusing to see ma obliged to look pleasant when she is in such a passion. Dear ma, would not you like to box our ears?'

'Hey? what?' said uncle Jeff.

'The girls were saying, that they never saw me look half so delighted as I am now doing, for the pleasure of seeing you here. *Girls, if you will provoke me—boys, I will punish you for this! You are behaving shamefully!*'

'O, mamma, it is so amusing to see you trying to look sweet and calm and pleasant at cross deaf uncle Jeff, and yet all the while in such a passion with us.'

'I'll tell you what has just come into my head, mamma,' said Miss Pokenham the first, 'now don't let anybody laugh—have you all got your listening faces ready? are they all screwed up not to laugh?'

'Hold your tongue, Jane,' said Mrs. Pokenham.

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'Ready! ready!' exclaimed *omnes*.

'Why, this is my project,' resumed Miss Pokenham;' to make up a match between our little minikin finikin Fanny Carr and our great deaf uncle Jeff.'

Mrs. Pokenham half screamed with fear —the rest laughed outright.

'Mamma, they would be such a nice couple. Our deaf uncle Jeff, and little minikin finikin Fanny Carr. Such an overgrown giant and such an undergrown doll. It's of no use blushing so, Fanny Carr—you make uncle Jeff look at you, your face is so on fire. He'll wonder what in the world you are blushing so about. Don't you see how he is staring?'

Little Fanny Carr lifted up her eyes and saw those of their formidable visitor fixed full upon her face, whereupon she rose from her seat and got out of the room as quickly as possible.

'Pray who is that little thing?' asked uncle Jeffery of Mrs. Pokenham, as they were left together in the evening—'pray who is that little thing who has just gone out of the room?'

'Do you mean Fanny Carr? O, she is a little creature that has seen better days, and we let her be here because my feelings won't let me send her away. She is so happy, and so attached to us, poor thing, and she just makes herself useful by doing any trifle that fails in her way. She keeps the keys of the store-room, and the tea caddy, and the wine cellar, and the beer, and the cellaret, and she fills up her time with sewing for the girls, and she has the care of the linen, and she makes all the pastry, and does the preserves —but what I most prize Fanny Carr for is, that she is such a good nurse—she nursed the children through all their maladies, and never left them when we had the scarlet fever; everybody said that she would catch it, but she never did, though she was with them day and night. Yes, Fanny Carr is a most excellent nurse.'

'So she is your housekeeper, and your cook, and your plain-sewer, and your nurse!'

'O, no, uncle, I don't give her any wages.'

'A servant without wages?'

'Uncle, I see that you don't like to have Fanny Carr sitting at the same table with you. I am sure I beg your pardon, but I did not think of it. I don't much think that she would like to eat with the servants, but I'll see. At all events, I can send her her dinner up to her own room.'

'Let the little thing stay,' said uncle Jeff.

'But, my dear uncle, I confess it was very thoughtless of me to seat her at the same table with you, and I can very well make her go,'

'Then I shall go too!' said deaf uncle Jeff.

Mrs. Pokenham of course immediately withdrew her proffer. She could only regret that she had been so inadvertent as to place her highly-respectable, and highly-endowed, and fortunately rich uncle Jeffery, at the same table with a poor little minikin finikin old maid. Fanny Carr was still tolerated, and uncle Jeffery seemed so far to overcome his aversion to her as to permit various little offices which she was constantly performing for him in her character of general usefulness. She arranged the cushions in his easy chair—for, after the first fit of sullenness, uncle Jeffery permitted himself to be installed into its comfortableness—she fetched him his slippers, and reached him his footstool, and got him the newspapers, and handed him his hat and his stick when he went out, and took them from him when he came in, and always met him with a smile; and, some way or another, deaf uncle Jeff could hear Fanny Carr's gentle voice almost without the help of his ear-horn, better than he could understand other people with it.

'I wish I had deaf uncle Jeff's money!' said Master Daniel. 'How I would make it fly! He has not the heart to do anything with it but keep it to get moth-eaten and rusty.'

'There he is under the window,' said Humphrey.

'No matter what one says, he can't hear us. It is such fun to look him in the face and hoax him—telling him what an old curmudgeon he is, and all the while making him think that you are paying the greatest compliments. Mamma does that in fine style. Now I'll show you her honey, milk, and sugar way.'

And so saying, Master Daniel walked up to his deaf uncle Jeff, and, with an insinuating look and a soft smile, said, 'It gives me the greatest pleasure to assure you that I think you have not sense enough to enjoy either your life or your money.'

'Hey? What do you say?' said deaf uncle Jeff, applying his ear-horn.

'O fie!' exclaimed the little old maid, turning very red—'how can you mock his infirmities in that manner?'

'I'll tell you what,' said Master Daniel, turning sharply round upon the poor dependent—'I'll tell you what—mamma ordered you to make the amiable to old deaf uncle Jeff here for our sake, but she begins to think you are doing it for your own.'

'O Master Daniel!' exclaimed little Fanny Carr, 'you know that I try to be kind to everybody—indeed I ought, for I feel what it is to wish for kindness myself; and when I

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see how you all play upon this poor gentleman, because he happens to be deaf, I can't help feeling the more pitiful over him; but it would be just the same if he were poor.'

'Hey? hey? What does she say?' asked uncle Jeffery.

'She says that she is quite exhausted with the trouble of speaking to you, sir, you are so very deaf.'

'Deaf! deaf!' exclaimed the old gentleman—'I am not deaf—I told you all before that I was not deaf.'

'O Daniel!' exclaimed Fanny Carr, with the tears in her eyes—'how can you so misrepresent me?'

'Hey? hey? What does she say?' asked uncle Jeffery.

'She says, sir, that she is quite worn out with the trouble of shouting and running errands.'

'O Daniel!' ejaculated the little old maid.

'And she says that if you don't go away very soon, she must. But mamma is very angry with her for grumbling, and I shouldn't wonder if she were to show her the way to the door.'

The little old maid burst into tears.

'Hey? hey? What's all this?' ejaculated the deaf gentleman.

'O mamma, you are here, and it's high time,' said Master Daniel, as Mrs. Pokenham entered. 'If I had not been here to meddle, Fanny Carr was managing deaf uncle Jeff in fine style.'

'Fanny Carr,' said Mrs. Pokenham, 'your conduct has been more and more extraordinary every day.'

'What have I done?' exclaimed the little old maid.

'You have been trying to manage my poor silly uncle—that has been plain enough in my eyes for a long time. You tantle after him, and go about fetching, and carrying, and coaxing, and looking like a lamb, and you know that you have your own private ends in it all.'

'What ends can I have?' exclaimed Fanny.

'Why, Miss Carr, if I must speak the plain truth—and I am a plain-spoken person, you know, not much given to flattery—I must say, that I see clearly enough what you are aiming at. When one party is foolish, and the other is artful, it does not need much discernment to see what is in the wind.'

'What do you mean, ma'am?' exclaimed the little old maid in an agony.

'Why, I mean, Miss Carr, just this; you see that my uncle is a silly old man, and rich, and you being clever and poor, you think that you may be able to catch him in a match. You think that it would be a better thing to be Mrs. Jeffery, and keep your carriage, than even to live the idle life which you are now doing.'

'The idle life which I now lead!' exclaimed the little old maid. 'I, who toil in labours which have no end through all the weary days, without either thanks or wages!—and now to be accused of this!'

'You see that my uncle is half a fool, and you think that you can juggle him into marrying you. But I tell you once more that I will not stand by and see such things done in my house; so just have the goodness to tie up your things, and take your departure in half an hour—and very glad shall I be when you are fairly gone, for I see how artful you are, and there is no knowing where the mischief may end.'

Fanny Carr burst into an agony of tears.

'Mr. Jeffery is not the weak man you think him, but clear-headed and strong-minded enough to detect me, if I were the artful creature you accuse me of being. But I will go. I will not stay to be accused of eating the bread of idleness, or practising subterfuges—no, I will go and beg my bread rather than that!—anything is better than that;—only—only—don't laugh at him any more, poor gentleman, for if he were to find it out he would feel it, for he is not so simple as you think him, dear, poor gentleman.'

'Hey? hey? what does she say?' asked uncle Jeff.

'O, my dear uncle Jeffery, don't mind her. She is an ungrateful creature, after all the kindness which we have shown her, to be weary of paying you the few litle attentions which I had enjoined upon her. But, my dear uncle, I have sent her away. Nobody shall slight you in my house, so I have sent her away.'

'Humph!' said deaf uncle Jeff.

The little old maid's eyes were drowned with tears—whatever poets may say in rhyme of the superlativeness of the beauty of bloodshot orbs, and their red curtains, and all that, we have always been accustomed to consider those sort of beings amazingly unbecoming. But it happened that our little heroine forgot to consult her looking-glass upon the occasion, and consequently her eyes became something like the red sea. The poor little body, however, proceeded as expeditiously as might be to lay her scanty wardrobe as straightly as possible in a wooden box, which was both small enough and large enough; to collect her needles and her knitting; a few letters, carefully tied up with a piece of faded red riband, the dates of which proved chronologically that the paper had been made full twenty years ago, all of

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them written in a neat masculine hand, like that of a school usher, and dated as many years back; to look very particularly at and sigh over a little morsel of sandy hair; to stroke her favourite pussy for the last time; and then to take her clogs, her reticule, and her umbrella; to look at an old summer-house; to gather two or three leaves from an old tree; and then to pass through those inhospitable doors into the wide, wide, bleak and cold world, alone—alone.

There are some hearts like some vegetables—they take root anywhere, no matter how unfavourable the soil, or how blighting the atmosphere. Thus it was with the little old maid. In spite of derision, and scorn, and buffeting, her feelings had grown to the inanimate stone walls that surrounded her, simply because they had nothing else to cling to;—and if the mere impulses of a loving nature could thus attach her to repelling and repulsive objects, how tenderly might she have loved what was really loveable!

Poor Fanny Carr, with the liberal, large, and inexhaustible sum of somewhere about five shillings in her pocket, looked mentally round for a shelter for her head, and having bethought herself of one of Mrs. Pokenham's discarded servants, who had married and settled, determined upon seeking shelter there.

In a little cottage by the road-side, as clean as those dear cottages of England ever are, with a neatly-trimmed garden without, luxuriant in summer blossomings, and with the whitest of white curtains within, and the reddest of red floors, and the brightest of round tables, and the most resplendent of fire-places, sat the little old maid, dressed as neatly as if fairy hands had been her tirewoman, and working at her needle as blithely as birds perform their daily task of singing. What though her five shillings was very nearly exhausted, she could earn almost sixpence a day, and that was independence, and independence was happiness.

There came a great dust whilst the little old maid was thus delving for happiness and sixpence a day, and a noise of carriage-wheels; and looking up to see what might be coming, she saw a plain, respectable, grave, steady, brown-visaged carriage and pair, with a coachman in a brown livery before, and a servant in brown livery seated in the box behind, and lo and behold, it stopped at the very cottage-door where she was working; and so the little old maid jumped up, and threw down her cotton and her scissors, and hastened to tell them that it was all a mistake, when, to her particular astonishment, she saw deaf uncle Jeffery, getting down the steps, and walking across the cottage garden, and coming in at the door. And having gone thus far, the deaf gentleman took hold of her diminutive hand in his great gigantic paw, and gave it a squeeze, which almost made the little old maid cry out, which, however, she did not do, for ladies of all sizes very seldom cry out at a squeeze of the hand, generally bearing that sort of pain very philosophically, and then uncle Jeffery proceeded to draw one of the brightly-rubbed wooden-bottomed chairs to himself, for his own particular use, and to sit down upon it close to the little old maid.

'I hope you are well, Mr. Jeffery,' shouted the little old maid; 'it is very kind of you to come and see me. I hope you are well.'

'Quite well, thank you,' replied uncle Jeffery, 'and now tell me what you think has brought me to see you?'

'Perhaps,' said the little old maid, colouring slightly with the remains of a well-whipped, well-worn-down, well-subdued pride, 'perhaps you wanted me to do some plain work for you, Mr. Jeffery. I am taking in plain work.'

'You need not speak so loud, my dear,' said deaf uncle Jeff; 'you know you will tire yourself, you will exhaust yourself.'

'O, Mr. Jeffery!' said the little old maid, the tears rushing into her eyes. 'O, Mr. Jeffery, pray believe that I never complained, or never even felt it a trouble to talk to you. Indeed, I did not! I don't know how soon I may be afflicted myself.'

Uncle Jeffery took poor Fanny's hand, and gave it another squeeze that almost threatened it with compression. 'I know you did not. Yet nevertheless you must not speak so loud.'

'But you have not your ear-horn,' said Fanny Carr, persisting in shouting, lest her visitor should think that she grudged the trouble; 'but you have not your ear-horn.'

'But you know that I always told you that I was not deaf.'

The little old maid looked perplexed.

'But you never believed me—was that it?'

The little old maid coloured crimson, but she could not deny it.

'Well then, if I were deaf, I am better.'

'I am glad of it, with all my heart,' said the little old maid, 'for it must be a miserable thing not to hear a word that is said to us.'

'Yet sometimes it is better not to hear what is said of us,' replied uncle Jeffery.

The little old maid coloured deeply. She remembered too well all that had been said of him and before him.

'But do you know that I had, even when I was at the worst, quite hearing enough to know how kind you were to me, and how amiable to everybody else.'

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'O, you are too good to think so,' said the little old maid with a blush.

'And now tell me your plans, and if there is anything I can help you in, and really you need not speak so loud. You know I could always understand *you* even when I was very hard of hearing. Now tell me your plans.'

'O,' said the little old maid, 'they are soon told. The people who live here were Mrs. Pokenham's servants, and they are very kind to me, and I have got plenty of work, and I am quite happy and contented. Only if you want any shirts making——'

'I certainly would not let you do them.'

'O!' exclaimed Poor Fanny Carr.

'No, that I would not; for your gentleness, your kindness, your simplicity, your disinterestedness of character, deserve something better. Now you have told me your plans, shall I tell you mine?'

'Yes, if you please,' said the little old maid.

'Well, then, to begin with myself,' said uncle Jeffery, 'I have a few thousands a-year, I have a carriage and horses, and servants, and a very good house, and gardens and orchards, and pleasure-grounds; and I believe that all my own county consider me rather a respectable man.'

Fanny Carr got up and curtseyed.

'But yet I have the character of being a severe and sarcastic and morose man.'

'O no, that you are not!' warmly interrupted the little old maid.

'I am glad that you do not think so. Well, I have one want in my house. Can you guess what it is?'

Fanny looked puzzled. 'Money will buy everything.'

'Not the thing that I want.'

'Then it must be something very particular indeed.'

'It *is* something very particular indeed.'

'O, I'll help you to find it.'

'That is very kind, and I hope you will—I want—something to love.'

'The world is full of such things,' said the little old maid.

'To you who love everything from the overflowing of your heart, but not to me.'

Poor Fanny looked infinitely perplexed. 'I wish I could do anything to help you.'

'You can. I told you I had a carriage and servants, and house and furniture, and plate and money, but I have no one to share them with me; no one to ride with me, sit with me, walk with me, talk with me, take the head of my table—to love me if they could. In short I want a wife. Will you take this troublesome office?'

'O Mr. Jeffery!' exclaimed Fanny Carr, with a face as red *as blushes* could make it.

The plain brown chariot with the brown horses and brown hammercloth, and the servants in brown liveries, drew up with a great dash, quite in an unusual manner, at Mr. Pokenham's door. It was very evident that everything belonging to the brown affair was in a considerable state of excitement, in fact quite in a brown fever or sort of effervescence, and some way or another the agitation was communicated to the family of the Pokenhams within.

'Who can it be!' exclaimed Mrs. Pokenham. 'Don't bring them in here, but show them into the drawing-room. I always like to receive carriage people in the drawing-room; and, Jane, fetch me a clean pair of gloves.'

'La, mamma, a wedding! look at the white favours?' exclaimed Miss Pokenham the first.

'Then there's one chance less in the world,' said Miss Pokenham the second.

'It's all right,' said Master Daniel, 'I like bridecake, and I don't care how many people marry and are miserable, so that I get a good feast by it.'

'I like the quarrelling quite as well as the cake,' said Master Humphrey.

'Look!' exclaimed Mrs. Pokenham. 'I declare if it is not deaf uncle Jeff! I thought he'd be glad to come back to us; I made him so very comfortable with his chickens and easy chairs, that I thought he'd soon want to be back again, if that little deceitful Fanny Carr had not poisoned his mind.'

'He's a good customer,' said Master Dan.

'Mamma's legacy will keep well: it will be fine high game,' said Master Humphrey.

'How smart uncle Jeff is!' said Miss Pokenham the first.

'White silks and pumps, I declare, and a flower in his button-hole!'

'And what on earth is that little lump of finery behind him?' said Miss Pokenham the second.

'Why, goodness gracious! you don't think that uncle Jeff has been such an old stupid as to get married himself!' said Miss Pokenham the first.

'I shall faint at the bare supposition,' exclaimed Mrs. Pokenham—'an unnatural monster!'

'Here he comes, and his queen doll with him.'

Uncle Jeffery walked into the room as stately as the tallest grenadier in the service of Frederick the Great, dragging after him a bundle of white satin and white lace and French blond and white kid gloves and orange blossoms, and it really was astonishing to see how many dozens of yards they had managed to tie up together.

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'Is it you, uncle Jeffery?' shouted Mrs. Pokenham, of course not at all expecting an answer to her question.

'Yes, I have brought you myself and my better half.'

'What do you mean, uncle Jeffery?'

'You need not speak so loud,' said uncle Jeffery.

'True, true,' said Mrs. Pokenham, 'I had forgot that you are not at all hard of hearing.'

'I am not,' said uncle Jeffery.

Mrs. Pokenham stared in spite of herself.

'I always told you that I was not deaf.'

'You did, of course you did.'

'But you never believed me.'

'O yes, that I am sure I did,' shouted Mrs. Pokenham.

'Speak in a whisper as you used to do. Can't you tell each other what a fool, and a dolt, and what a piece of ugliness is cross and deaf old uncle Jeff.'

'O, uncle, and can you really hear?'

'Ay, a pin fall to the ground, I always had excellent hearing.'

'Yes, uncle, I know you had.'

'But you don't believe it.'

'O, certainly, certainly.'

'Well, if some people are hard of hearing, others are hard of belief. Perhaps you won't believe me when I tell you I am married.'

'Married! and to whom?'

Uncle Jeffery lifted up the veil of the bundle of white satin and pomps and vanities, and introduced 'Mrs. Jeffery.'

'Fanny Carr!' exclaimed the whole congregation.

'Wretch of a man!' exclaimed Mrs. Pokenham. 'Is it thus you come to wound our feelings!'

'And to make you what I hope you will consider a handsome present.'

'How liberal! how kind!' exclaimed Mrs. Pokenham, her hopes reviving.

'Yes, indeed, I have brought you my ear-horn tied with white riband, and I hope you will keep it hung up here in the drawing-room, to remind you of cross, deaf, old uncle Jeff.'

LOVE AND FAME; OR, A NEW TRAGEDY AT THE HAYMARKET.

BY ELI BLACKGOWN, D.D.

'Vien dietro a me e lascia dir le genti
Sta fermo come torre che non crolla
Giammai sua cima per soffiar de' senti.'
DANTE.

'Ay, there he rests with his fathers,' said the vicar, as they moved slowly away. 'Seymour, we have all lost our best friend.'

Then there was a dead pause. The grave gentleman stepped carefully along the alleys, avoiding, with a veneration rare among churchmen, to tread on the grassy mounds that hid the relics of mortality. His daughter hung still on his arm, and as she followed him with some difficulty, owing to the narrowness of the path, her downcast eyes were, perhaps involuntarily, turned towards their younger companion.

Between young Seymour and the clergyman's daughter there had long since existed a more than fraternal intimacy. But those years of unconscious happiness were far back in the past. Circumstances had so long estranged the two young persons from each other as to need the ceremony of a formal re-introduction on their meeting again.

Seymour was an orphan from childhood. His parents—his father at least—belonged by birth to that class of the British gentry, whose disinterested but undiscerning loyalty had attached them to what was once the creed of their country. He was a papist, and as such, it need scarcely be added, notwithstanding his high descent, he had lived poor and died unknown. His wife, who had renounced the luxuries of her father's home to share her husband's humble fortunes and embrace his religious opinions, had preceded him in his grave, and their only child had been thus bequeathed to the charity of the lady's brother, an officer in the royal army, and a bachelor, and was brought up at his uncle's estate in Monmouthshire, on the river Wye, not a hundred miles above Tinterne

Colonel Dearne, the uncle, though himself a good Protestant, deemed it due to his sister's memory to educate her child in the tenets of the Catholic church. Consequently young Seymour was trusted to the care of an Irish tutor and chaplain, and ere he had fully attained his fifteenth year, he was sent to an English college in Rome.

After a sojourn of seven years on the continent, he had been hastily summoned to his uncle's death-bed, to find himself, after that gentleman's decease, the sole inheritor of Dearne Park, and of all the rest of the colonel's large property.

Three months had now elapsed since the young orphan's prospects had undergone that sudden vicissitude. Seymour, who had during that long interval entirely confined himself to the solitude of his wide mansion, admitting and returning no visits but those of the best friend and neighbour of his lamented relation, the reverend Josiah Etheridge, vicar of the adjoining village, was now for the first time induced to view the family vault to which the remains of the late colonel had been consigned.

The circumstances connected with young

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Seymour's earliest education will easily account for what his conduct might have of exaggerated and romantic in the eyes of the worldly-minded who would otherwise be at a loss to conceive how a fortune yielding a net income of more than ten thousand a-year could fail to console the heir for the loss even of the only relation he had left in the world.

The dulness and loneliness of his uncle's country-seat, notwithstanding the loveliness of its picturesque neighbourhood, the sternness and austerity of his priestly Mentor, in spite of his ill-assumed jesuitical blandness, had moulded our young orphan's character to an habitual sadness, which the gloom of his half-cloistral education in Italy was not certainly calculated to dissipate.

Seymour had known no boyhood: and the premature development of his intellectual faculties had preyed within his soul with a dangerous activity, giving his constitution that gracility and languor, which, without materially affecting health, has at least power to damp and even utterly to extinguish the natural buoyancy and sanguineness of youth.

The death of his only relation left him, he fancied, alone and unloved in the world, and although he derived no slight comfort from his intercourse with his friends at the vicarage, still he worked himself into the belief that the interest they evinced in his behalf was only called forth by their sympathy in his recent bereavement, but that he was personally nothing to them.

Something indeed there was in the vicar's behaviour that might well justify his worst apprehensions. Mr. Etheridge was a man naturally of reserved and rigid manners, and although zealously attached to the church of which his eloquence had made him in his youth one of the greatest ornaments, yet so candid was his liberality, so scrupulous his delicacy and forbearance, that he was constantly on his guard lest a word should escape his lips which must be construed into a disrespectful allusion to his young friend's religious persuasion, or betray any attempt on his part as an indiscreet and uncalled-for proselytism.

This thought seemed perpetually to haunt the good clergyman, and to disturb the serenity of his mind; it spread an air of coldness and embarrassment on his conversation, to which his susceptible friend was but too apt to put the most unfavourable construction.

The mutual feelings of the two young persons towards each other were perhaps of a warmer, but still less definite nature. The awful solemnity which had brought the young orphan once more into contact with his youthful playmate, had prevented that spontaneous expansion of their yearning hearts which might have broken the ice at once, and placed them on the footing of their former acquaintance. Seymour beheld, with an admiration little short of amazement, his little Cary, with whom he was wont to romp, to roll and wrestle playfully on the lawn, now grown into one of the most stately, most elegant, most accomplished young ladies that ever graced the aristocratic circles at Almack's. Miss Etheridge had also repeatedly absented herself from her home on the banks of the Wye. Her father, who doted on her, had been prevailed upon to part with his only child during more than one cheerless season, and invested with his parental rights Lady Paget, a distant relation of Caroline's mother, that she might, under that lady's chaperonship, receive the advantages of a fashionable education in London.

Lady Paget had produced her ward with an indiscriminate hurry; and though her natural soundness of principle, and her very levity and vanity of disposition, made the young lady proof against the flattery and seduction that awaited her from all quarters, yet that universal homage could not fail to add to the natural wildness and giddiness of the self-willed country girl, and had won her from her admirers the unenviable but not wholly undeserved appellation of 'the most arrant coquette in town.'

And yet that same Caroline Etheridge, who appeared so utterly and exclusively in love with her sweet self, who had resisted the most splendid offers, and even, it was bruited, spurned that, to an English commoner's daughter, most irresistible temptation, a coronet—who had blanched even the painted cheeks of long-reigning beauties with jealousy, and driven several veteran lady-killers to despair—was not perhaps as hollow-hearted as she was, or as she fain wished to be, thought; and the ineffable relief that she felt whenever the close of the London season allowed her to run back to her lonely father in Monmouthshire, the gladness and readiness with which she re-accommodated herself to the homely routine of country life, would have made people believe that her heart lay among the shady groves and labyrinthine alleys of Dearne Park, with the dim recollections of childhood, when Harry Seymour was the sole companion of her rambles, when the dark countenance of the frowning priest broke suddenly on their juvenile frolics, as he called his truant disciple back to his task.

That Harry Seymour had now returned; and although their first interviews were, as we have seen, necessarily cold and formal, yet the vague curiosity with which the young beauty had rapidly surveyed her earliest friend, drawing her maiden-like parallel be-

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tween him and her more recent acquaintance in town, awoke a tumult of confused sensations in her bosom, which every other better experienced or more disinterested observer than Seymour could not have failed to read in the flitting colour of her tale-telling countenance.

But the desponding lover, with the most deplorable ingenuity, blinded himself to his happiness; and as he sat, almost breathless, close by her side, either listening to her harp in a trance of delight, or following her fair hand as she turned leaf after leaf of her drawing-book—in proportion as he discovered new talents in his gifted charmer, he sank lower and lower in his own estimation, and, with a diffidence rare in a man of his age, and which many would think unaccountable in one of his fortune, he laboured to deprive his love of its sole and essential aliment of hope, in the same measure as that passion took a more and more steady hold of his whole being.

The sun was setting behind the hill as they issued from their shady walk in the churchyard. It was a fine eve in October, and the blessed calm of heaven, which seemed to rest on the autumn-mellowed landscape, gradually wore off the sad impression left upon their minds by the performance of their pious duty, and their conversation assumed a more serene and cheerful tone. They had reached the main avenue leading through the consecrated ground to the church, and Seymour had now sufficient space to resume his place on the right of the clergyman—a position which he preferred, perhaps, because he wished rather to show his reverence than his gallantry, or perhaps, also, because in this arrangement the young lady's countenance would be naturally turned towards him.

'*Non omnis moriar!* A proud motto that of the Dearnes,' observed the young lady, alluding to the cognizance of that family, which had attracted their attention as they stood absorbed in their melancholy meditations at the foot of the monument. It consisted of a lighted torch fluttering in the wind, with those ambitious Latin words engraved in rude Gothic characters underneath. 'I wonder, Mr. Seymour, whether you mean to engraft your uncle's arms on your own escutcheon?'

'To tell you the truth,' answered the mourner, 'I have not thought a great deal about that matter. Depend upon it, however, while I live—at least while I continue the owner of Dearne Park—the armorial bearings of its ancient proprietors shall not be removed from their place.'

'Of course—I thought so. But are you aware of the obligations devolving upon the inheritor of that noble ensign? *Non omnis moriar!* Why, it implies a compact with immortality.'

'If so,' replied Seymour, 'the worthy knight, Sir Tristram Dearne, who first won that crest in the reign of Elizabeth, presumed too far on the valour of his latest posterity. You see,' continued the orphan, glancing backwards with some emotion, 'the colonel himself, notwithstanding his spirited conduct at Waterloo, is not likely to live long, unless it be in the memory of his only relative, and a few of his friends.'

'Not so, my son,' interrupted the clergyman gravely. 'That motto conveys to my mind a very different meaning—it expresses a Christian belief in that life beyond life which awaits us all in another and a better world.'

'But surely, papa,' interrupted the young lady, clinging more fondly to her father's arm, and looking half-earnestly, half-playfully up to his face as if to implore his indulgence for having so unceremoniously cut short his sermon, 'there can be no harm, I hope, in longing for fame; you would not blame your young friend, would you, if he were to take upon himself the fulfilment of the awful legacy bequeathed on his race by Sir Tristram?'

'Me, Miss Caroline!' exclaimed Henry, smiling and colouring faintly. 'I confess I feel inclined to give that motto your honoured father's spiritual interpretation.'

'I should be very sorry,' quoth Mr. Etheridge, 'if it were otherwise—sorry, at least, to see you courting fame for its own sake. Fame is, like Fortune, a wanton mistress; she smiles more kindly on those that sigh least after her.'

'Perhaps so, father; but then, like Fortune, she is to be swayed by a daring heart and an unswerving will. I am sure, father, were I a man, I would be a hero!'

'So would a great many—so would almost every one of us, my dear child; so long, at least, as we are on the sunny side of thirty; but, alas! where millions set down their stakes, it is only one that carries the prize.'

'But, oh!—that one, my dear father—oh, how I could love that one!'

'Silly child,' cried the doting parent, in a chiding tone; then, as he looked down on the beaming countenance of the lovely enthusiast, he added, half-whispering, while he kissed her eyes, 'Heroes make but indifferent husbands.'

Seymour had walked in silence, and with an averted face, whilst that brief dialogue between father and daughter was going on. He felt in his eyes that smarting sensation that the infliction of pain brings upon the eyelids of those privileged beings who are too proud to shed tears.

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Golden visions of glory had, to say the truth—as is but too often the case with men of generous nature—haunted the student amidst the day-dreams of his youth. His diffidence, or rather his pride—for nothing in the world is more common than to mistake one for the other—had afterwards shrunk from the dangereus experiment; not indeed because the 'bubble reputation' danced less temptingly before him in all the luxuriancy of its prismatic colours, or because he was aware of the disenchantment that awaited him, had the floating bauble ever come to burst in his hands; but in consequence only of that despondency which now made him equally backward and shy in his suit.

That vague juvenile aspiration, however, though dormant, lay still unextinguished in his bosom, and the earnest fervour with which that romantic girl had dwelt on the value that she attached to the distinction of worldly renown, had re-awakened a thousand wild fantasies, against which his reason had vainly striven to guard his susceptive imagination.

It seemed as if every word the young damsel had spoken was meant to penetrate him with a sense of his own unworthiness, and to upbraid him for his unjustifiable presumption. He felt that one so beautiful, so high-minded and gifted, was only to be captivated by a man who could lay at her feet the homage of multitudes; that he who had cowered before the difficulties besetting the threshold of the temple of immortality; who had, in sheer despair, resigned himself to obscurity, and allowed the more fortunate to forward their claims to public applause, had by that very act given up his chances as a candidate for what seemed to him the noblest reward human ambition could look forward to—the hand and heart of Caroline.

On the other hand, Caroline, with the quick apprehension of her sex, had read the secret of her lover's heart. She knew that her words fell not on unwilling ears, and she was determined to use her ascendency to rouse him to a better opinion of himself.

She loved Harry Seymour. The indefinable anxiety with which she had awaited the return of her childish associate, the sympathy she felt in his unfeigned sorrow for the loss of his relative, and also—why should she not avow it?—a secret complacency at his accession to his uncle's fortune, had given rise to a hidden thought, which recurred the more obstinately the more she was determined to banish it from her mind—that Mrs. Seymour would be, to say the least, as euphonious a name as Miss Etheridge.

She loved Harry Seymour. She loved the pale but noble and intelligent countenance, the manly bearing, the pensive mien of her unenterprising admirer. The newness and freshness of his ideas, the primitiveness of his manners, the earnestness of his unstudied conversation, the rapid and almost involuntary outburst of mighty, but as yet aimless, undefined, unacknowledged passions. She compared him with the vain and vapid and fashion-moulded *exquisites* that crowded Lady Paget's drawing-rooms in Harley Street, and she felt assured that, even in the judgment of the world, a parson's daughter might safely venture to produce the heir of Dearne Park as her affianced lover, without much dreading the charitable comments of her friends.

All this, however, could not suffice to her feminine ambition. That Caroline Etheridge, to whose eyes the most pompous names in the British Peerage had appeared unmeaning and lustreless, could not be resolved to settle in life with no other title to boast of than the wife of Henry Seymour, a country gentleman, an esquire, *comme il-y-en a tant.* She was not extravagantly vain of herself. The fine compliments with which she had been surfeited in town had no farther turned her head than to impress her with the conviction that she was 'rather a pretty and a winsome girl,' a notion with which every rational being, but a few of her own bosom friends, would have found it difficult to disagree; but after such a long hesitation, after three or four years of glorious flirtation, she felt the necessity of affording some consolation to her discarded suitors, by introducing into society something that might justify her uncommon pretensions. She was not, in short, vain of herself, but she wished to have reason to be proud of the man of her choice.

Her own Henry, she fancied, was precisely the man a wife could look up to. He had all of genius, except the consciousness of his own powers, and a woman's vanity, she added, could have no greater gratification than to reveal to a wavering mind the secret of its own greatness, and point out the high destinies to which it was entitled to aspire. She wished to make him great before she called him her own.

'You must have met such a one more than once,' continued Seymour, 'during your staying in town, and what is more, you must have had more than one of such gifted beings at your feet.'

'Such a one in London!' replied the young beauty, with an accent of utter disdainfulness: then suddenly checking himself—'Heroes in London!' she added, 'to be sure, I have seen the Duke of Wellington and Marshal Soult and Van Amburgh and

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Thalberg, and a hundred others; but,' she concluded, colouring deeply, 'not one who cared to be great for my sake.'

'I see what it is,' interposed the aged clergyman in a serious tone, 'your aunt in town has been stuffing your head with earls and dukes, and you dream of nothing but coronets.'

'Coronets! earls and dukes!' retorted Miss Etheridge, almost angrily; whilst the remembrance of her hundred trophies, and the ghosts of Lord Augustus Gilderoy, and Viscount Geraldine, and other victimized scions of British nobility, rushed vividly in her sight. 'My dear father, a lord in the country, among his tenants, in the eyes of his household, may be a great man; but in London, in parliament, if he be nothing but a lord, why, he is lost in the crowd of his peers. The man I could love,' she cast her eyes to the ground as she spoke, 'should have no peers in the world.'

But, Miss Etheridge,' urged her bashful admirer, 'the dulness of the times must, in some degree, be called to account for the scarcity of heroes in the present generation. I hear that some of our young noblemen are trying to reproduce, in a mock-tournament, the gallant achievements of chivalrous times. If so, some chance will be left for the happy mortal whom you may allow to wear your colours.'

But Seymour attempted *badinage* with an ill grace; and although Caroline had also carried on the conversation in a jesting strain, her flashing eye and animated brow revealed the existence of another and a loftier nature under the apparent levity and thoughtlessness of her manners.

'The age of chivalry is over,' said she, solemnly. 'Who knows it not? We are told so every day, and never hear it without regret. But be it even so! There are more roads than one to immortality. Are laurels never to be reaped but with the edge of the sword? Is not the minstrel as great as his hero? and,' added the fair lady turning abruptly, and looking into the face of her lover, and are you not, Henry, a poet?'

Seymour was taken by surprise. He fell back one or two steps as if caught in *flagrante delicto* and a few seconds elapsed before he had assumed sufficient composure to answer in the same tone of affected gaiety. 'A poet!' said he, 'perhaps I may be, but then I don't know it.'

'You know it,' said Miss Etheridge, 'and, what is more, we know it too. Think you, you can conceal it from your friends. O Henry,' she added, reproachfully, 'are you not that same Harry Seymour who ran to my father, all bathed in tears, appealing against the hard-heartedness of your tutor, who had torn 'your sonnets to pieces, while he pestered your head with his Latin? Don't know it? Why ever since a child, you were a poet?'

'Such a poet as I then was, I am still, dear Caroline,' said Seymour in an unguarded moment; for that sudden appeal to bygone days had brought the two young friends back to the style of their former familiarity. 'I plead guilty—I am a poet. Within my inmost soul, out in the fields at large, face to face with nature,' and, he would have added, near you, 'I confess I still believe myself a poet. You see I am alone, and not happy. I have nothing in the world to do; hence have I leisure to think—hence I muse and dream. Had I the means of seizing upon the strange, flitting fancies that haunt and weary my imagination, had I language to clothe, to embody the nameless, shapeless beings of my teeming brain, I might, perhaps, write poetry—but alas! my muse, like an owl, delights in the darkness of my benighted understanding; it seems to dread the broad glare of daylight. I have tried, Caroline, I have never ceased to try; but after a few hours of tantalizing efforts, after poring over a few lines until my poor head grows dizzy with intense application, I start up in despair, cast my half-blank page into the fire, exhausted and conquered, at war with myself, the most wretched being in existence. O Caroline, tempt me not! I heard it often repeated that poets are mad; but were I to persist in the attempt, I should be a madman ere I could be a poet. Tempt me not, speak not to me of fame. Fame! O how invitingly she seemed to smile before me! how near within my reach! how ready to fall in my embrace! but now I am cured of illusions. I have abjured the false demon for which I was ready to barter body and soul. Speak not of fame, dear Caroline, it has still a powerful hold on my imagination, but I know I could have no better chance of success in my suit than the poor lunatic I heard of in Naples, who was in love with the moon.'

Yet Caroline was not discouraged. 'If you want to sail up to the moon,' said she, producing a folded paper which she had treasured up with great care, 'here is wherewith to make you a balloon Yes! what would you say, if one of those unlucky half-blank pages had miraculously escaped the flames to which you doom them, to fall into the hands of your friends; and what would you answer, moreover, were I to repeat all that my father, who is, you will acknowledge, a competent judge, has said about these few lines which you have wrung from your *long-tortured, sterile, benighted* imagi-

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nation? Here,' she continued, unfolding the scrawl, and holding it up to him, 'do you recognize your handwriting? Nay, start not, frown not! No mortal ventures to intrude into the sanctuary of your muse. This precious fragment was not stolen; it was gathered from the green turf, where it lay, or rather where it flew about, the sport of the breeze, like a sibylline leaf. It was found in our orchard, by the water-side, by a nymph, in the shape of our gardener's daughter Lucy, who watched you as you threw it from you, and thought, the little vixen, that the poor outcast would fare better if trusted to the tender mercies of her mistress.'

'O—ah! I see,' quoth the poet, colouring; 'it is only the chorus of an unfinished tragedy.'

'Tragedy!' re-echoed the delighted Miss Etheridge, 'you don't say so! Are you writing a tragedy?'

'I can't well say I am writing,' said Seymour, 'but I have often thought that I would rather attempt that than any other style of writing.'

'Dear me—a tragedy! and what is the title?'

'"Vanina—Vanina d'Ornano;" but I told you it is an unfinished and a never-to-be-finished composition.'

'Be not so sure of that, Mr. Seymour,' interrupted Mr. Etheridge; 'you do yourself great injustice. Think not that I would ever advise you to stake your peace of mind against the vain and precarious excitement of popular applause. But you are alone, you are rich and independent, you can afford to be a poet: cultivate the noble art for your own, not for the world's sake. Follow the impulse of your genius, and dwell with the visions of your imagination. Raise yourself above the level of the petty cares and miseries of life. You do not want, you are not fit, to commune with men. There is a religion in poetry which purifies and exalts the soul of the priest that sacrifices at its altars.'

'Ay, be a poet, Harry Seymour,' cried Caroline; 'and if not for your own, for the sake of your friends. Why stand you aloof from us? we are the only friends—the only persons you have seen these three months. Is it not strange that you should have secrets for us? Believe me, your faint-heartedness is unworthy of you. Till we have tried, we know not what we can do. Were I a man, I repeat, I would feel degraded if I thought that what another man does is impossible to me. Think you, heroes were made of different stuff from the common run of mortals? No, 'tis only to their firmness of purpose, 'tis to their inexorable iron will that they owe their success. 'Tis that greatest of virtues we envy your sex—courage, that has power to come off conqueror of all obstacles, to smooth all asperities. O for an hour of that manliness that believes itself equal to the most arduous undertakings!'

Seymour replied not. By this time they had reached the solitary residence of the good vicar, a lovely cottage embosomed in a cluster of elms, which stood on the bank of the river, less than half a mile from the church. They had stopped before the steps of the threshold, and the fair Caroline, carried away by her transport, had relinquished her father's arm to give force to her arguments by the prestige of action.

'Come to us, Henry,' said she, in a softened tone, as her lover prepared to take leave. 'Come to us, and bring your Vanina with you. I am sure we will love her, and endeavour to bring you to think better of her. Go, and return not without your manuscript—we shall expect you to tea. Bring all you have written. The whole evening shall be given to the Muses. Lose no time. Goodbye; say not a word—no excuse. Go and fetch it.'

Saying this, the parson's daughter shook the proffered hand of her lover with impatince, as if to repeat her injunction, and the devoted Seymour was too well schooled in former times to hear and obey, to have now a will of his own.

'It would be no very easy task to describe in what state of mind the young poet found himself as he proceeded alone on his way to Dearne Park. That short conversation had gone far to bring him into the terms of old acquaintance with his friends. She had called him Harry! He had even addressed her as his dear Caroline! she had read his verses, and expressed a wish to see more of them. She loved a poet, she wished to make him a poet, that she might have reason to love him. O Caroline! who would not be a poet, who would not be great for her sake? Could then his whole life, consecrated to that sole purpose, make him worthy of her affection? Men in love are religiously inclined. Seymour threw himself on his knees on the green bank of the Wye, and raising his eyes towards the west, where the last faint twilight was rapidly fading in the sky, he prayed to his Creator that it might please him to clear away the gloom in which his mind was involved, and to raise him to the level of the gifted being in whom all his hopes of earthly happiness were centred.

He reached his disconsolate mansion. Before he had called for lights, he laid hand on his manuscripts. He turned a few pages, and cast a hasty glance over such lines as he was wont to dwell upon with complacency. He

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felt sick at heart, and for a moment hesitated between going or sending a messenger with his excuses. He roused himself by a strong exertion, however, ordered his horse to be saddled, and rode, full speed, to the vicarage.

That evening and the next, and again every evening during winter, Henry was busy at the vicarage. Late in the night and during the best part of the day, he shut himself in his study to grapple with the *God* that was working within his soul. Soon after sunset, his friends awaited him at the cottage with the result of his labours. By dint of unremitting toil, the self-tormenting poet brought his tragedy to a close. No assurance or remonstrance on the part of his friends could reconcile him to his own production, or cure him of his endless misgivings. Every scene, every speech, every line, were written over again and again with restless anxiety, and Vanina underwent as many dresses as a Jewish bride during the nuptial ceremony.

These pains, however, were amply remunerated. Nothing could exceed the interest with which the excitable girl watched over the progress of her lover's *Penelopean* work. She seemed so proud of the office of his adviser and confidant! Her eyes were so earnestly and rapturously rivetted on his countenance as he read over to her every passage which he trusted to have brought to perfection! She learned so spontaneously those verses by heart! they sounded so sweet when she attempted to give them utterance! they looked so beautiful when she transcribed them in her album!—That she loved those verses, in short, it was sufficiently plain, and was it presumptuous to infer that she looked not with indifference on their author?

Vanina was to the Monmouthshire lovers what the romance of Lancillotto was to Francesca da Rimini—

'Galeotto fu il libro e chi lo scrisse.'

Before the last act was fairly concluded the great word was spoken, and the two young friends were united, as fast, at least, as the communion of souls through the organ of lips could bind them.

The attendance of Mr. Etheridge to those academical lucubrations had been less assiduous than was at first anticipated. The discharge of his duties and the infirmities of age obliged him oftentimes to leave the happy lovers alone. But he had seen enough of the nature of that literary intercourse to be able to divine the ultimate result, without, however, feeling alarm or uneasiness about it. The difference of religion had, indeed, given him some apprehension; but although he had never come to an open understanding upon that subject, he beheld with satisfaction his expectant son-in-law, regularly seated in his uncle's pew, among his congregation, and had little doubt that the liberal-minded youth would be easily led by affection to abjure those tenets which Caroline's father was in duty bound to denounce from his pulpit as erroneous and perverted.

Sure on that ground, the good vicar witnessed with paternal emotion the progress of that mutual attachment that was to realize his fondest expectations. One evening, as he returned late from the deathbed of the poor, he was met on the threshold of his drawing-room by Henry and Caroline, who, without speaking, threw themselves at his feet. The old clergyman threw his arms round their necks, and invoked all the blessings of Heaven on the heads of his children.

On the morrow, Lady Paget, on her way to town, drove up to the vicar's gate, and asked for her niece.

Lady Paget was the widow of a Welsh baronet, who had left her more money than she could fairly dispose of. She was *rather* young still, and handsome; gay, generous, and fond of excitement. After the death of her husband she had taken to literature. Her house in Harley Street was the favourite haunt of half the wits of the day. But learning with her was not suffered to interfere with pleasure. Men of genius met at her parties to rid themselves of the burden of their celebrity. Like the knights of olden times, they laid down their panoply ere they were ushered into the lady's bower. They condescended for one evening to behave like well-mannered and good-natured men. Many a spoiled child of fame had been cured of his humours and oddities, of his vanity and self-sufficiency; many a pride-swollen spirit had been sobered and tamed under the levelling system of that half-republican establishment.

Placed herself in a middle station, between the highest and the middle ranks of society, Lady Paget aspired to become the link between aristocracy of birth and aristocracy of mind. Her large fortune, and the lavishness with which she made free with it, rendered her entertainments irresistibly attractive. Her *soirées musicales* and *petits soupers* were the rendezvous of all that London could boast that was select and agreeable. Nowhere else could you feel more crowded, and yet more at your ease.

Of that fashionable circle Caroline Etheridge, it need scarcely be said, was the brightest ornament. Caroline was distantly related to Lady Paget, but not in a degree that could entitle her to that vague appellation of niece, under which she had been introduced into so-

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ciety. She had, however, become strongly attached to her relation, and was for several years her indivisible companion in town.

In the secresy of her heart, Lady Paget might perhaps have wished to dispose of her niece in a different manner; but finding that the preliminaries of that important negotiation that was to decide Caroline's fate had been irrevocably entered into, she declared herself well pleased with the intended match; she closeted herself for an hour with her niece, and, at the end of a long deliberation, it was agreed between the two plenipotentiaries that Caroline should accompany her aunt to town, that her betrothed should follow soon after, and, having spent a few months amid the gaieties of the London season, the two young people should be solemnly united at the parish church of Mary-le-bone, thence to proceed on a short excursion to the continent.

'A poet, you said?' inquired Lady Paget of her niece, as her travelling-carriage rolled rapidly on the London road. 'Did he ever write for the annuals?'

'No, my dear aunt,' said Caroline. 'Did I not tell you he is just arrived from the continent?'

'Well, my dear,' said the aunt, 'but that will never do, you know. Of course you must be expected to marry somebody.'

'But, aunt, he is *so* diffident.'

'Never mind, Caroline dear; we'll bring him out—we'll bring him out.'

And out, in fact, they did bring him. Caroline's happiness was too great to be quietly treasured up in her bosom. Her lover's mind had revealed itself before her astonished gaze with a blaze of light which shone as superhuman in the estimation of the devoted girl. Seymour appeared to her great beyond her most sanguine expectations. Well versed as she was in all the productions of modern literature, both English and foreign, naturally gifted with exquisite sensibility and taste, her judgment of her lover's work was as well grounded as the partiality of affection allowed. But, had she even mistrusted her own opinion, there was her father, who, however friendly to Seymour, could not be said to be in love with him—her father, who, she had good reason to believe, was as thorough a connoisseur as any man in existence, and whose admiration of Seymour's verses even, if possible, exceeded her own. Seymour was a poet, she was sure—such a poet, indeed, as the world never beholds more than once in a century;—and Seymour was her own, and he loved her—oh! as only poets can love!

Had she been able to sit down with this pleasing conviction—had she been satisfied with the tranquil possession of that *rara avis* of lovers—had Seymour, as she was willing to flatter herself, been everything to her,—Dearne Park might have been, as the opera has it, 'a heaven of love.'

But she wished her judgment to be sanctioned by universal suffrage; she wished the whole world to share her own enthusiasm; she wished all her acquaintance to witness, to applaud and envy her choice. She deemed it a guilt to defraud her own Seymour of the homage that was due to superior intellect, a crime to condemn him to the obscurity of his country-house. As a wife, too, she had a share in his fame, and, whatever might be his mind about it, she was, on her part, by no means inclined to resign it. She did, indeed, contemplate, in the distance, a day of happy retirement—of rural, domestic felicity; but that could only be when she and her husband could rest under the shade of his laurels, when she could feel assured that the eyes of the world would follow the gifted bard in his retreat, that Dearne Park would be looked upon as the shrine of genius, the Abbotsford of the West.

The deluded girl found in her aunt a heart but too fatally prone to sympathize with these extravagant views. Indeed, the young lady's ambition, ever dormant at home, had been suddenly re-awakened at first sight, during the first interview she had with her relative. Lady Paget, though not herself an authoress, nor more than reasonably affected with *bluism*, attached, however, more importance to literary reputation than is generally the case with persons of fashion in England. She had been instrumental to the rise of more than one of those talented youths who are known through the world under the ever-verdant designation of 'promising genius'—a distinction which they not unfrequently carry to their grave; and she persuaded herself, not without some foundation, that as far as patronage could go, no one could labour at the promotion of rising talent with better chance of success than herself.

There was bustle, and *éclat*, and a throng of carriages in Harley Street. Lady Paget, it was understood, gave one of her grandest *soirées*. It was not a rout, nor a concert, nor yet one of your harum-scarum carnival entertainments that, for want of a better word, go by the name of *bals costumés*, but, what is most extraordinary at a fashionable house in London, a literary reunion.

Lady Paget, it was also rumoured, had on this occasion been very particular in her invitations. Her accomplished as well as aristocratic friends were, as usual, blended in a crowd, but the literary element evidently prevailed. It was a set of men with high, pro-

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minent foreheads, bald heads and serene eyes; middle-aged ladies, with smooth brows and radiant countenances—soft-speaking, soft-smiling, soft-moving. Our reporter, one of those accurate observers whom nothing escapes, ascertained that ladies were more numerous than gentlemen, that both almost invariably wore eye-glasses, and that some of the most stately matrons were decorated with diadems in the shape of laurel wreaths. Conspicuous among the number were the authors of 'Denham,' 'Chevereux,' etc., of 'Midian Hay,' 'Harriet Simple,' etc.; one of the nine muses of the British aristocracy lately enumerated in the 'Quarterly,' and the editress of that *sans-pareil* of fashionable annuals, 'The Love Token.' The rest of the company was made up of dowager-ladies and countesses, editors of fashionable magazines, authoresses of popular works of fiction, a lord bishop and a swarm of his daughters, and a few young lords privileged to carry on their flirtations with the said bishop's daughters. There were, moreover, two foreigners, a German professor, and a Russian count, who understood not a word of English, a Scotch reviewer, a translator of Sophocles, and last, not least, M—— the actor.

A deep and almost awful silence prevailed in the motley assembly. Every one seemed to be aware that he had come not to talk, but to listen, and waited impatiently for the beginning of the performance.

Lady Paget, who had stood in the centre of the apartment to receive her visitors, seeing her company assembled, it being exactly ten, led her niece to the piano, opened it with her own hands, and said, 'Now, child, your overture.'

Caroline struck up the first notes of the famous overture to 'William Tell,' with that masterly hand long since accustomed to command applause. Every now and then she gently tossed her head backwards, as if to shake off the auburn ringlets that danced wantonly about her beautiful face, but in reality to see how her lover stood the tremendous ordeal to which her ambition had brought him.

Seymour sat alone, at a little distance from the piano, his face turned towards the audience—the manuscripts of his 'Vanina' lay open on the table before him. He was pale—paler than usual—and though apparently calm, and almost haughtily serene, it required no very keen observer to perceive that his heart quailed within him. His dress was plain, but strictly correct; the only article of his attire that might have appeared rather objectionable in any but a literary reunion being his neckcloth, which, (as, accustomed to warm climates, he had never been able to endure the stiff, starched stock then in fashion,) consisted merely of a riband, and left the neck half uncovered, adding not a little to the ease and gracefulness of the movements of the head. It was what, on the continent, was styled a *cravate à la Byron*.

Our young poet gazed vacantly, and, as it were, mechanically, on the glittering crowd whose attention he had had the supreme rashness to engage for two or more hours, resting his head on his hand, with his elbow slightly leaning for support on the table. He was stared at in return, and especially the bishop's daughters directed against him as well-maintained a fire from their eye-glasses as they ever poured over Rubini or Mario at her Majesty's Theatre. Some occasional whispering and tittering also broke forth from the solemn stillness of the assembly, the meaning of which, if it ever had reached his ears, would not have been greatly calculated to reassure the embarrassment and uneasiness of the poor pilloried poet.

However, he was in for it. Caroline and his aunt had so long insisted on the necessity of producing his drama, that the harassed author had been at last prevailed upon to read part or the whole of it, privately and confidentially, to a very few of Lady Paget's literary friends. Little did the poor wight imagine what was meant by a *very few friends* in London!

Many of his audience were utter strangers to him, for, notwithstanding Lady Paget's endeavours to introduce him, so wide was the range of her acquaintance, that a personal intercourse with all of them was altogether impracticable. But how much greater would his perturbation have been, had he been more familiar with the usages of the country; had he heard the comments of the boldest of the party on the novelty of an exhibition, which, however less uncommon in the land of improvisatori where he had been educated, appeared, to say the least, unexampled in England.

But Seymour was young and handsome—two advantages that went far to secure in his favour the suffrage of the most tender, and, as we have seen, the largest part of his auditory; and as his eyes flashed, and his cheeks flushed with the rapid emotions that the glorious strains of Rossini's overture roused in his bosom, his audience were soon made aware that they stood in presence of one of those gifted beings whose energies need only to be directed to a proper object, to be sure of their ascendency over their fellow-creatures. Nothing also could equal the manliness, mellowness, and flexibility of the tones of his voice, and notwithstanding a slight *cantilena* which he had contracted from his attendance

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at a declamatory school in Italy, his vivid and impassionate delivery had something in itself irresistibly suasive and winning.

He had little or no action; at least his diffidence and trepidation did not allow him to make any attempt at gesticulation, but there was an eloquence in his countenance, a language in the ebbing and flowing of his flitting complexion, an expression in the movement of his head, in the quivering of his lips, in the very faltering of his voice, that had power to rivet the attention, and found its way, unerringly, immediately to the sympathies of the bystanders.

The first words were, as might be expected, almost inaudible; but as he warmed with his subject, as his eyes met Caroline's, who had silently stolen from the piano and resumed her seat by the side of her aunt, scarcely less pale and less anxious than the poet himself—the rest of the company faded from his view, and he proceeded with that impressive ardour, with that heart-storming vehemence, with which he alone who created can read, and which proves how little the most unearthly music can add to the natural melody of the human language.

Caroline had grasped Lady Paget's hand, and pressed it convulsively. She cast a rapid glance over such of the company as she thought were most likely to sympathize with her feelings. She watched the effect that those sweet tones to which her innermost heart-strings so readily responded, would have on their dull and impassive ears. She spied their countenances as the reader lighted on one of those passages that had so often brought tears in her eyes. She hated them for their inconceivable, transcendent stupidity. She would have blasted with her angry looks any one who had so far ventured to infringe all rules of decorum as to whisper or yawn in her presence.

Alas, poor Caroline; and yet that was for her an evening of triumph, of full, unequalled success. The first act had been listened to with that respectful but rather frigid attention which characterizes an English audience, especially among persons belonging to the *nil admirari* school of good-breeding. But as scene followed after scene, and the interest attached to the subject, and the rapidity and intensity of action, the beauty of style and the real merits, in short, of the composition, became apparent, the ladies especially were carried away by their enthusiasm, and gave the most unequivocal testimonies of their satisfaction.

As the last words were drowned in a burst of unaristocratic but uncontrollable applause, Seymour shivered all over, as if all his vital spirits had flown tumultuously to his heart, and the overwhelmed Caroline buried her face in her aunt's bosom to conceal her tears.

Scarcely had the excitement of these first plaudits subsided, when M———, the distinguished tragedian, advanced with a dignified respectfulness among the titled crowd, and laying his hands on the manuscripts that had dropped from the poet's hands, 'This masterpiece,' he exclaimed, bowing obsequiously, 'must become my property. The poor artists of the Haymarket are not gifted with the inspiration with which he alone who dictated can render due justice to such poetical effusions; but deign to trust your drama with us, and it shall be attended to with all the zeal and diligence that our art can contrive.'

A loud acclamation followed the motion of the honest tragedian. Seymour, not well prepared for the compliment, instinctively laid his hand on his 'Vanina,' but a glance from Caroline sufficed to bring him to reason, and the delighted actor was suffered to carry off his prize.

On that very evening, during that first ebriety of recent success, poor Caroline began to reap the bitter fruits of her vain glory. The editress of the 'Love Token' begged to be introduced to the hero of the evening, and without further ceremony bade him to be seated at her right hand, and, as the phrase goes, utterly *monopolized* him for the rest of the evening; and as the bishop's daughters, long-necked as cranes, tall and erect as Lombardy poplars, stood crowding around him, gazing on him in stupendous amazement, the loving girl, who was not even permitted to catch a glimpse of her Henry, began to be visited with some strange twitches of jealousy, alarmed lest the day should come when Seymour's popularity should raise a barrier between her and her happiness, and when the flattery of the world should wean her lover from her. Such were not the evils, however, that Providence had in store for her.

Scarcely a fortnight afterwards the good people of London swallowed a hasty and half-cooked dinner, to be in time for the new tragedy at the Haymarket. But the author of the new tragedy, and she whose life seemed to depend on its success, had no dinner at all. Seymour was early at the theatre in a private box with Lady Paget, her niece, and the editress of the 'Love Token,' who, since the eventful evening of experimental rehearsal, had become Caroline's shadow. The young ladies surveyed the audience with eager opera-glasses, to recognize the numerous friends who had promised to attend. But Seymour shrank back in his box, as if anxious above all things to pay due attention to the eldest lady, but in reality because, although almost utterly unknown in London,

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he felt as if all the eyes of the mighty audience were fixed upon him.

Alas, poor votary of fame! come forward and dare to look at this dread jury that are here convened to pass their verdict on the work of your brain. See among those rows of vulgar gaping faces in the pit, still stupified by the first drowsiness of the digestion of their honest English dinners, whom you would deem likely to comprehend the poetry of your soul; whom you would select as fit to be introduced into the sanctuary of your mind, whom you would raise to the level of your loftiest inspirations?—and is it of such a crowd of these men, for each of whom, singly, you can entertain no feeling short of utter contempt, that you, proud man, stoop to court the gregarious acclamation?—is it from the roaring of such a menagerie that you, privileged being, you phœnix, suffer yourself to be disturbed from the serenity of the ethereal region, through which it was given to your broad-winged genius to expatiate?—is it, in short, and to make use of a homely phrase, before such a flock of pigs that you are so lavish of the gems of your thought? Can you ever hope to captivate their attention, unless it be by the broad grins of Jim Crow, or the exploits of Jack Sheppard?

True, there are a few among the vast assembly to whom our sweeping conclusion does not equally apply. That sour-looking personage, in the threadbare suit of black, is a poet himself, and a critic; that blond-ringleted miss in the dress-circle is a novel-reader and a sentimentalist; and that French governess by her side has been for many years a mistress of elocution. But the first is too much engrossed with the importance of his censorial office, the latter too much penetrated with the dignity of their sex, to give way to their feelings. The sable gentleman will perhaps turn away his face, the blond damsel will perhaps hide her tears in a moment of sudden commotion—but he would think it beneath his respectability, she would deem it ungenteel, to applaud. It is only the coarsest part of your audience that condescend to give any outward sign of approbation or blame. None but ungloved, unwashed hands that clap; none but the vulgar that claim the privilege of hooting and hissing.

'Vanino d'Ornano' was not a work deprived of such intrinsic merit as might recommend it to the attention of an intelligent public. The subject could never be better chosen. The fierce Corsican chieftain, Sampiero, deliberately murdering a beloved wife, under the impulse of overstrained notions of patriottism, and yet full of enthusiastic devotion, kneeling to the fair creature who is about to expiate by a violent death an offence originating in excess of love; and the terrified but resigned and dutiful Vanina claiming the homage of the knight while she acknowledges the right of the husband, and asking, as a last boon, to be strangled with the very scarf she had in happier days given him to wear at the tournament or on the battle-field—all this constitutes a complex of deep, gentle, unexplored pathetic, and ought to afford to a fertile imagination such a theme as gives us reason to wonder that it has not, at least with notorious success, been previously hit upon.

Seymour had assuredly made the best of his subject. The long assiduous cares he had bestowed on his drama had left nothing to desire as to unity and plausibility of plan, as to the development and delineation of characters, as to harmony and loftiness of style. But he had little or no knowledge of stage effect. Correct and almost perfect as a literary production, his piece stood little chance of success as a dramatic performance. Those who had been so warm, and, pretty generally sincere, in their commendation of that juvenile essay, when actuated by the prestige of the poet's own declamation, were themselves surprised at the tameness and languor that pervaded the whole of that chaste but unimpassioned exhibition. The very nicety and fastidiousness with which the mistrustful author had been tampering, as it were, with his own imagination, had spread a coldness on the progress of his action, and made of it a mosaic work, rather admirable for the high finish of its parts than striking or interesting as a whole.

Moreover, 'Vanina' was a classical work. The ideas with which the young poet's mind had been imbued during his college education at Rome, had induced him to look upon the models of Greek and Latin antiquity, not only as the best, but as the sole standard of perfection. Now these classical notions, which begin to lose ground even in what are emphatically called classical countries, if ever they prevailed, have long since been exploded in England; and, notwithstanding the solitary instance in which a very superior genius recently knew how to attach a deep interest even to a work of that description, it can be frankly asserted that few tragedies after the old Grecian cast, unless they appear before the public under the auspices of the author of 'Ion,' are likely to live long on an English stage.

But it was not on the ground of its good or bad qualities that 'Vanina' was to encounter its fate. There are a hundred accessory circumstances on which the ultimatum of popular judgment depends, much more than on the intrinsic value of the piece itself—a hundred mysterious, all-powerful, inexorable

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agencies, which the proud Seymour neglected or scorned to propitiate. He had no free tickets, no hired *claqueurs*, no interested partizans, except his few aristocratic friends in the dress circle, whose demonstration, if they had ever condescended to make any in his favour, was sure, out of sheer contradiction, to call forth the jealous animadversion of the many-headed mobocracy above and below. Some untoward events also conspired from the very outset to keep the audience that evening in a state of unwonted restlessness and clamour. A parcel of lawless schoolboys, absent without leave from one of the most fashionable establishments near town, after carousing and revelling the whole afternoon at a low tavern in the vicinity, had been seized with a sudden whim to see the new play, had rushed in, in a state of intoxication, and taken possession of the centre of the pit, whence one or two of them had, before the raising of the curtain, been laid hold of by the police, and turned out of the house for misdemeanour. The remaining party had been sobered and struck dumb for a moment; but a sullen determination had been entered into by the most daring of them to leave nothing unattempted to mar the amusement of their peaceable neighbours, and to wreak their vengeance on the luckless drama and its inoffensive author. They were most deplorably true to their engagement; and what with their broad jests, and their outrageous peals of laughter, their crowing and squeaking, and snoring and sneezing—with the cries of 'shame' and 'silence' of the vexed and scandalized honest citizens around them, and the jostling and pushing of the vainly-interfering police, it soon became impossible to restore order and calm. A mirthful mood, so deplorably jarring with the solemn pathos, to which the action on the stage was intended to wind up the spectators' mind, gradually gained ground and became contagious, and when, as the evil powers would have it, towards the close of the fourth act, the interest of the drama being at the highest pitch, one of the minor actors, by one of those awkward incidents against which it is in the power of no human intelligence to provide, dropped one of his whiskers, the roaring of the brutal multitude knew no limits. Scarcely a word could be heard of the whole ensuing act, and the curtain fell amidst such a finale of howls and groans as the Haymarket had not, time out of memory, witnessed the equal.

The wretched Seymour, who had seen nothing, knew nothing of the silly farce that was acting in the pit, little accustomed to the misrule of an English audience, was at a loss to comprehend why so many of his countrymen would so wantonly conspire to the demolition of his dearest hopes. At first he rubbed his eyes and shook his head as if to rouse himself from a dream; but as the noise increased, and there could be no mistaking its object, he turned deadly pale; a cold moisture oozed from his forehead, and he remained during nearly the rest of the performance motionless, mute, insensible to the distracted words of consolation that the young ladies, who had now withdrawn in disgust from the front of their box, were vainly attempting to administer to his mortally wounded spirit. At length, startled by one of the sudden uproars that announced the coming close of his martyrdom, he seized his hat, and rushed from the house, leaving the ladies to take care of themselves.

The failure of one of his pieces is no great disgrace to the French or English dramatist, and by no means considered as an irreparable calamity. Writing is for him a trade, and as much liable to the ups and downs of earthly vicissitudes as any other money-making concern. He looks down on his incensed judges with a philosophical sneer, and repairs to a good supper with his friends, the actors, calm, stoic, impassible, as if nothing had been.

But with Seymour it was otherwise. He had been brought up in a country where, as literature can entertain no hope of any solid reward, it must rest satisfied, and aspire to nothing beyond the vain clamour of popular enthusiasm. He was rich, and had been impelled to enter into the dangerous arena by no selfish view of pecuniary preferment. That single drama had been the object of his secret pride for years: he had strained his faculties even to their utmost exhaustion to bring it to its present state of perfection. He had been wrought up by his friends to the fond persuasion that it was well worth, that it would well repay, all the cares he had bestowed upon it. But that was not all. Caroline laid as much stress as himself on that ill-fated performance. The glory that its success was to confer on its author, he thought, was the chief title to which the ambitious girl had, in her fond anticipation, yielded her heart. In vain would the worldly wisdom of his friends have urged the utter oblivion into which the memory of his signal discomfiture would have been buried in less than three days, and the kind forbearance with which, while he continued the owner of Dearne Park, even the remotest allusion to that unlucky evening would, in his presence, have been carefully avoided. The chill despair spread its blasting ravages on his morbid sensibilities; the proud heart of the poet was broken.

On the morning the messenger sent by

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Lady Paget to his hotel, reported that Seymour had returned nearly at midnight, ordered post-horses, and started for Dover.

Farther intelligence stated that he had been met by several of his acquaintance in various parts of the continent, until, two years after his expatriation, he was said to have taken holy orders in the convent of St. Onofrio at Rome.

Caroline has been these last two years absent from the gay circles at Almack's, and Lady Paget's *soirées*, deprived of her sweet presence, have been pronounced *tristes* beyond endurance. On the first Sunday after the performance of the twice-murdered 'Vanina,' a long and elaborate article, vindicating its excellence, appeared in the 'Literary Gazette,' signed X. Y. Z. It was afterwards ascertained that it was penned by the fair hand of the compassionate editress of the 'Love Token.'

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THE METROPOLITAN.

No. CXXVIII.

DECEMBER, 1841.

THE BACHELOR OF FIFTY.*

BY CHARLES DE BERNARD.

Madame d'Epenoy, whose summons the Marquis de Morsy was now hastening to obey, was a lady about his own age, or it might be a year or two older. Unlike the generality of her sex, she had marked the approach of age with calmness and resignation, and saw no necessity for expiating, by the scrupulous austerities of a tardy devotion, a youth of pleasure, during which, some charitable persons hinted, she had shone with a somewhat profane brilliancy. In her case the oratory had not succeeded to the boudoir. Devotional exercises, which with so many women form the sole interest of declining life, filled but a small portion of her existence; she seemed to perform them less from a conviction of their intrinsic worth, than from a respect for outward appearances. Never seen at mass except on Sundays, she belonged to no pious association, and the name of her confessor remained a secret. In the eyes of the society in which she lived, she was consequently looked upon as an *esprit fort;* a reputation generally little advantageous to a woman of fifty, but which in her particular instance met with a toleration so universal, and at the same time so unusual, that we shall not be considered tedious if we explain the reasons that justified it.

If Madame d'Epenoy applied herself with too little fervour to spiritual things, she made amends by her ardent and indefatigable taste for worldly intrigue. Had she been a man, she would have been a politician: like M. Gastoul, she would have aspired to a seat in the chamber, and might perhaps have become a minister; being a woman, the activity of her mind found a sphere of action more limited, yet not less animated. As the departure of her youth, and with it of her beauty, shut her out from the career of coquetry, she had retired from it philosophically, and with a good grace, and had struck out for herself new occupations better suited to her time of life. Without mentioning the care she bestowed on a very considerable property, which she managed with a scrupulous economy, the cause of which will be explained hereafter, her boudoir was the scene of as much business as the chambers of a lawyer in first-rate practice.

Belonging to the *ancien régime* in right of her father, who died an *emigré*, and to the new in right of her husband, who fell at Montmirail, she had friends in either camp, whom she cultivated with equal graciousness. Independent in character, and unbiassed by prejudice, her opinions tended rather towards progress than retrogression, although her good taste restrained within just bounds the propensity to keep pace with the spirit of the times. As, in her youth, she had the taste to be a coquette without scandalising the society in which she moved; so in more mature age

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she was unlikely to give umbrage to it for the sake of speculative opinions. Thanks to this prudent conduct, Madame d'Epenoy, who lived in the Rue de Grenelle St Germain, held in that exclusive and intolerant quarter an exceptional position; a position, indeed, of which it would have been difficult to find a second example.

Liberal and without devotion, this double defect, by which another would have been undone, was pardoned in her, even by the most sensorious; it seemed as though she were privileged to do as she pleased, and had a plenary indulgence for all her errors. But the knowledge of the world which Madame d'Epenoy displayed under all circumstances, was not her only claim to the consideration, we might almost say the influence, she obtained, in a great many houses. A cause, more efficacious because founded on views of personal interest, strengthened her credit, and ensured her everywhere a gracious reception; this was the almost certain advantage to be derived from her intimacy. Truly devoted to her friends, she was always ready to serve even an indifferent acquaintance; and in so doing, she yielded less to the natural tendency of a benevolent character, than to the workings of an active mind, to which repose was distasteful, nay impossible.

The position of Madame d'Epenoy admirably seconded her obliging disposition: having had a large acquaintance both under the Empire and the Restoration, she maintained her intimacy, unbroken, with several influential men of both classes. She might be seen in the morning in the cabinet of a minister soliciting a place for one of her protégés devoted to the Revolution of July, and the evening might find her pleading the cause of a Spanish refugee, or a prisoner of La Vendée at an hotel in Faubourg St. Germain. Legitimates, moderates, republicans, enjoyed an equal share of her patronage, which like the sun, was no respecter of persons, and shone impartially upon all.

From what we have said, it is easy to conclude that Madame d'Epenoy had a numerous *clientèle*. Had the benevolent ministry, which she loved to fulfil, but one branch—and it was, we confess, a principal one—this alone would have furnished her with employment sufficient to keep her activity from rusting. This branch, covered throughout with leaves, some green and fresh, but more frequently sere and yellow, was the one of which M. d'Epenoy had spoken so irreverently in his conversation with the Marquis de Morsy. Like the generality of women who have fulfilled their destiny in love and maternity, Madame d'Epenoy sincerely compassionated those whose hard lot forbade their experiencing either the one or the other. Celibacy, which for a man is not without its advantages, seemed to her an anomalous, unhappy, almost ridiculous condition for her own sex; and as inactive compassion did not suit the vivacity of her temper, she no sooner perceived the evil, than she racked her brain to provide the remedy. Widows who were disposed to pair again were certain of her encouragement and assistance: she felt a warm interest in spinsters without fortune or without attractions, whose establishment was rendered difficult by one or other of these defects: but it was in encouraging virgins run to seed, to blossom again with a promise of matrimonial fruits, that the chief fervour of her good offices was displayed. The position of this latter class touched her particularly, and she held its claims to a fair share of favour to be the more incontestable that they were founded on seniority.

'Girls still in their convents have the future, widows the past, to cheer them,' she would sometimes say; 'if necessary, *they* can wait, for anticipation or remembrance makes their state endurable; but how can I prescribe patience to old maids, who have neither the consolations of memory, nor the illusions of hope, to reconcile them to the present?'

In conformity with this just distinction, Madame d'Epenoy divided her protégées into three classes, and though equally devoted to the interests of all, she bestowed her chief attention on that in which a lengthened celibacy, combined with ripeness of years, constituted what she laughingly denominated 'a case of urgency.' According to her, this urgency began to show itself at five-and-twenty; at thirty, it became imperious; at thirty-five, there was not a moment to be lost; and at forty, the *demoiselle à marier* was in the condition of a soul in purgatory. If, by dint of negotiation and intrigue, Madame d'Epenoy had succeeded in rescuing one of this unfortunate class from the Gehenna in which she languished, Louis XIV., when he placed his grandson on the throne of Spain, could not have felt more satisfaction than she experienced in her benevolent triumph. And indeed, his success was far more easily attained, for a prince may more reasonably aspire to a crown, than a spinster, doubly arrived at years of discretion, to a wreath of orange flowers.

After what has been already said respecting the character of Madame d'Epenoy, it is superfluous to add, that her conduct towards the opposite sex was regulated in strict conformity with the matrimonial combinations which occupied her thoughts without intermission. She wasted little attention on mar-

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ried men, for, bigamy being interdicted, she had nothing to hope for from them. They, however, acquired some little value in her eyes, when, as fathers of families, they had under their control, a son or two of marriageable age. But with bachelors the case was different; whatever their years, whether boys just let loose from college, or greybeards in the last stage of dotage, provided that fortune had not been a stepmother to them, they were looked on as belonging to her by right of pursuit, quite as legitimately as the hare belongs to the sportsman, or the ship of a hostile nation to a privateer furnished with letters of marque.

Thanks to her knowledge of human nature, to her ingenuity, to her untiring perseverance —thanks, above all, to her talents, which would have done credit to a first-rate diplomatist, Madame d'Epenoy was seldom unsuccessful in the charitable employment she had undertaken. Indeed she obtained, occasionally, results at which she was herself astonished, and which seemed almost fabulous. Her rights to the title of the providence of spinsters, laughingly bestowed upon her by her son, were really legitimate and incontestable. Her friends pretended that it was as impossible to picture to themselves Madame d'Epenoy without the necessary accompaniment of a client to provide for, as for an artist to paint Jupiter without a beard, or Cupid without wings. This satirical assertion was fully borne out, at the moment when our tale begins, by a confidential dialogue which took place in the Rue de Grenelle St. Germain, between Madame d'Epenoy in person, and another lady evidently of long standing on her list.

The scene in which this conference was held, was a small boudoir on the Entresol, hung with grey paper, with a red flock border, by no means remarkable either for freshness or elegance. The furniture it contained seemed cramped for want of room. The clock and candlesticks were too large for the mantelpiece: the picture frames touched the ceiling, and one door was condemned, to afford a place for the sofa, whose proportions were ill suited to the size of the apartment. But however shabby and old-fashioned might be the appearance of this den, when compared with the magnificent style of modern furnishing, it had its frequenters, both male and female, as untiring in their assiduities as the courtiers of the *Œil de Bœuf* at the levee of the *Grand Monarque*. This fact requires no explanation, as the reader is already aware that in that narrow chimney-corner, on the medallions of that faded carpet, under shelter of that mysterious screen, was carried on that most interesting branch of social industry, the manufacture of marriages!

Madame d'Epenoy was seated in an easy chair, her feet resting on the fender, and her elbow on a guéridon, on which, thrown together in confusion, were a newspaper, a snuff-box, a pair of spectacles, and a box of pâte de jujube, with her favourite cat sleeping peacefully in the midst. The vivacity of her glance, the regularity of her features, and the sweetness of her smile, bore witness to her former beauty; whilst the open exhibition of her grey hair, and the simplicity of her dress, showed how little trouble she took to conceal, and how sincerely she resigned herself to the approach of age.

Opposite to Madame d'Epenoy, seated on the edge of her chair, in a stiff perpendicular attitude, was a being, who claimed recognition as a woman, in right of her shawl, her petticoats, and some other feminine attributes in her dress, but who might have assumed masculine attire without exciting in the mind of any one, a suspicion of her sex. This bony and angular creature was furnished with large features, rendered more ugly by an expression of habitual ill-humour; and her brick-dust complexion, when heated by anger, communicated to her broad face no inconsiderable resemblance to a copper basin. The shaft of the column was in perfect keeping with its capital, but, by some capricious freak of nature, this unattractive *ensemble* terminated in a pair of rather pretty feet; since uncharitably disposed persons were used to remark, in consequence, that of all the person of Mademoiselle Alphonsine du Boissier, the feet were certain to be the first part visible, so much care did she take, whether sitting or standing, to draw attention to them. We will finish this portrait with a remark, which to us seems very important; viz. that the original was within a very few years of that critical era which we have likened to a state of purgatory.

To obviate this catastrophe had been for some time Madame d'Epenoy's principal object, and although her endeavours had hitherto been attended with but little success, she persevered in them with admirable constancy. The more difficulties she encountered in providing an establishment for her protégée, the more heartily did she labour in her behalf; for self-love gave a new stimulus to her benevolence; and the failure of her first negotiations having gained some notoriety, she felt it a point of honour to silence impertinent pleasantry by bringing the matter to a prosperous issue. In a word, the marriage of Mademoiselle du Boissier had become Madame d'Epenoy's fixed idea, and she would fre-

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quently interrupt a conversation on some other subject, by remarking, with evident unconsciousness and absence of mind, 'This is all very true; but it will not provide a husband for my poor Alphonsine.'

With persons to whose discretion she could trust, she usually summed up with a phrase hardly less inevitable than the *delenda Carthago!* of Cato, or the vote of General Bertrand for the abolition of the censorship on the press.

'Do help me, like a good creature, to find a husband for my poor Alphonsine.'

In spite of the desperate manner in which she had been hawked about, Mademoiselle du Boissier had not as yet met with a mortal sufficiently generous to raise her to the rank of a married woman. To the anxieties of hope deferred might, perhaps, be attributed the cloud that habitually overspread her countenance, and which, on the occasion of which we write, had settled into an expression of despondency nearly akin to dismay.

The silence, which reigned in Madame d'Epenoy's drawing-room, had remained unbroken for several minutes. The mistress of the house was drumming with her fingers on the lid of her snuff-box, and casting furtive glances from time to time at her visitor, who, with eyes fixed on the ground, sat, stiff and immovable, on her chair, as Lot's wife after her transformation.

'What would you have, my dear?' said the old lady at length, in a tone of compassion, 'it is annoying, I confess; and since M. Ferrand would have suited you so exactly, it is doubly unfortunate that you should not suit him: but then what could have possessed you to receive his first visit in tight sleeves?'

'Why should I not, madame?' replied Mademoiselle du Boissier, raising her head; 'they are quite the fashion.'

'Are you yet to learn that good taste should always be preferred to fashion? I do not find fault with tight sleeves in themselves, but they are becoming only to women whose bust and arms are faultless.'

'I do not see—'

'You do not see your own defects, my dear Alphonsine; few people are very clear-sighted in that respect. But I must take the liberty to say, I who have a right to speak frankly to you, that in your case a little more attention to the becoming would not be altogether thrown away; had you worn sleeves of reasonable dimensions, you would not have furnished occasion for M. Ferrand's satirical remarks, and your marriage might at this moment be concluded.'

'But did those unfortunate sleeves so entirely disgust him?' asked Mademoiselle du Boissier, struggling to repress a sigh.

'Not the sleeves exactly.'

'What was it then, may I ask?'

'It is useless dwelling farther on the subject; the affair is at an end, and the best thing we can do, is to think no more of it.'

'Pray answer my question; I wish particularly to know what M. Ferrand said to you.'

'Nothing that you need take offence at; I should not have permitted that. It was merely a foolish joke.'

'O! a joke.'

'Yes, and in the worst possible taste; but these gentlemen of the faculty have never been remarkable for refinement.'

'Once again, what did he say?'

'Well, then, he told me—but I am sure you will be angry—you know that all persons of his profession are a little given to materialism; he, in particular, appears to pay great attention to form. The habit of looking on everything in a medical point of view may possibly have influenced his taste; —perhaps his antipathy to thin women may be founded on the idea that they cannot be in strong health.'

'And he told you—'repeated Mademoiselle Alphonsine impatiently.

'Well, then, my dear child,' said Madame d'Epenoy, who, in spite of all her good-nature, was not without a slight vein of sarcasm in her composition, 'since you will know all, M. Ferrand told me, that having long ago finished his medical studies, he felt no inclination to recommence a course of osteology.'

Glowing with indignation to the very tips of her ears, Mademoiselle du Boissier affected a disdainful laugh.

'Nor do I,' said she, 'feel any inclination to marry a man of coarse manners, with a red nose, and a strong odour of tobacco. I disliked him at our first interview, and my only reason for not telling you so at once was, that I feared you might think me ungrateful, after all the trouble you had taken on my account.'

'This is all very well,' replied Madame d'Epenoy, gently stroking the back of her cat, which had just awakened; 'but I really begin to think that you are under the influence of some evil spell! I was calculating this morning the matches arranged for you, and afterwards broken off, during the last five years, and the number quite appalled me. Twenty-seven, or twenty-eight! I never met with a case so disheartening.'

'But, madame, it is not my fault!' observed Mademoiselle Alphonsine, deprecatingly.

'At least it is not for want of good will on

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your part; but that is not enough. Your position calls imperatively for a certain tact, in which you are unfortunately entirely deficient, and which my instructions have hitherto failed in imparting to you. Were you very young, very rich, and very pretty, that difficulty might easily be smoothed away, but at thirty-seven—'

'Thirty-six, madame.'

'Thirty-six, or thirty-seven, it matters little which; with a fortune of eighty-thousand francs at the utmost, and a person—not remarkable either way—you ought to be agreeable, very agreeable. I do not mean to reproach you with any deficiency in this respect, but the great point is to be agreeable with judgment, and at the right moment.'

Madame d'Epenoy had been too charming a woman in her youth for any one to dispute her right to lecture on the art of pleasing. Secure to be listened to with deference, she took a long pinch of snuff, and leaned back in her chair, with somewhat of the dictatorial manner of a professor.

'My dear,' said she at length, pointing to the *console*, 'you see that vase. If you wished to move it, in what way would you take hold of it?'

'By the handle,' answered Mademoiselle du Boissier, like a school-girl repeating her lesson.

'Just so. Now with men you must act in the same way. Every man has his handle—a weak point, a predominant taste, a passion, a mania, if you like to call it so. We women have equally our salient point; but it is almost universally one of these two, vanity or affection; whilst in men its varieties are infinite, by reason of the multiplicity of positions in which they may be placed, and from which we are excluded. I have explained this to you several times already. But it is all labour lost. In your twenty-seven or twenty-eight interviews, has it ever happened to you to discover this providential handle, to grasp it at once, and secure your establishment by one dexterous stroke of policy? Alas, never! on the contrary, you seem to make a point of doing the reverse of what is politic; and this certainly not from want of salutary warning. To cite but one example; let me remind you of your last interview—not yesterday's—the one three months ago, with Monsieur—Monsieur —'

'Monsieur le Biancourt,' said the spinster humbly.

'Exactly, M. de Biancourt. I forewarn you that he is a grave man, tired of the world, who, in consequence of a series of domestic troubles experienced during his first marriage, holds coquetry in abhorrence, and desires nothing in a wife so much as serious and solid qualities. Your lesson is taught you beforehand, and I, in full security, am perfectly satisfied that for once all must go right. You appear—and what a figure meets my eyes? —a young lady dressed for a ball—flowers in your hair, a trimming of point lace on a dress almost up to your knees, to display your feet, (of which, by-the-bye, you rather exaggerate the beauty,) cameos, brooches, bracelets, and I know not what besides—ornaments enough to stock a jeweller's shop! You had not advanced three steps into the room before I saw, by the contraction of M. de Biancourt's eyebrows, that the case was hopeless. Observe, too, that he was an excellent match; very good-natured, in spite of his look of severity, and that, once married, you might have turned him round your little finger: the only thing to be avoided was scaring him at first sight.'

'You are perfectly right, madame,' said Mademoiselle du Boissier stiffly, 'yet I cannot regret my want of judgment; for if my dress had not the good fortune to suit the taste of M. de Biancourt, on the other hand his appearance and conversation were anything but agreeable to me, and I cannot sufficiently congratulate myself on not becoming his wife.'

'Really, my dear, you play your part with most edifying dignity,' replied Madame d'Epenoy; 'I am convinced that were we to go over the list of men who have declined the happiness of being yours, not one would find favour in your eyes; nevertheless I have, more than once, heard you speak more humbly. I remember that you generally, not to say always, found these gentlemen very much to your taste, and you must allow me to retain my opinion, in spite of the high tone you assume to-day, that had any one of them made you an offer, which I regret to say none of them ever did, you would hardly have had the heart to refuse him.'

'*Mon Dieu!* madame, do you think me, then, so anxious for a husband?' asked Mademoiselle Alphonsine, blushing purple.

'I beg your pardon, what did you say?' inquired the old lady, raising herself in her chair, and looking at her protégée with an air of ironical surprise.

'At any rate, if I wish to be married, it is only because a single woman has a false position in society, or rather has no position at all. And as to marrying for the sake of a husband, I assure you most sincerely, that if I consulted my own taste in that respect —'

'You would remain single?'

'I can see nothing so very attractive in con-

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stant intercourse with a man, who is probably coarse, vulgar, and unintellectual, certainly selfish and egotistical.'

Madame d'Epenoy leant forward, and lowering her voice, as if she feared to be overheard by some invisible witness of their dialogue,—'My dear friend,' she said, 'we are alone, and you know that I will not betray you. Open the floodgates of your heart, and give your pent-up indignation vent; it will do you good. But never repeat before others what you have just now said to me.'

'And why should I not, madam?'

'Because, although it is frequently right to conceal our wishes from the public, it is always wrong to asperse them.'

'I say nothing but what I think.'

'*I* may believe you, but *others* would be more incredulous. A stranger hearing you rail thus at poor mankind, might perhaps be reminded of the fox in the fable, and fancy that matrimony was not yet ripe enough for your taste.'

Madame d'Epenoy sank back again into her chair, and Mademoiselle Alphonsine, blushing deeper than before, bit her lip until the blood came. This was not the first time that a storm had threatened to burst forth between the protectress and her protégée. The patience of the latter was often taxed to the utmost, to endure without reply the satirical remarks with which the old lady loved to season her good offices. On these occasions she prudently held her peace, however; for a quarrel with Madame d'Epenoy would have been equivalent to a renunciation of all hopes of marriage. On Madame d'Epenoy's side, although she would have moved heaven and earth to find a husband for 'her poor Alphonsine,' she could not help bearing her a secret grudge. She felt towards her the same sort of ill-humour that a shopkeeper may be supposed to experience at the sight of goods which have remained upon his shelves until they are perfectly unsaleable.

'I might have made a dozen marriages,' she would sometimes pettishly say, 'in the time I have wasted upon her.'

On such occasions it was very ill-advised in Mademoiselle du Boissier to profess her antipathy to men, and her indifference to marriage: some bitter sarcasm was the unfailing chastisement of her rashness; quickly recovering, however, her habitual good-humour, Madame d'Epenoy would spare no pains to heal the wound she had inflicted on the self-love of her protégée, and endeavour to obliterate the remembrance of it by renewed efforts to provide her with a husband.

After a short silence, Madame d'Epenoy again spoke, and in a gayer tone,

'Come, my dear, do not pout. A cross look will spoil the prettiest face! Napoleon and Louis XVIII. would sometimes say a cutting word, and if I do the same, you must forgive me in consideration of my good intentions. I promise you to redouble my zeal, never to rest until you are satisfactorily established. Keep up your courage; we will succeed at last, and you shall lose nothing by a little delay! In the mean time I have one advice to give you, or rather there is a point on which I wish to take counsel with you.'

'I am all attention, madame,' replied Mademoiselle du Boissier, a little soothed by the change in Madame d'Epenoy's manner.

'Until now you have not deigned to think of a husband of more than five-and-forty years of age; and, indeed, what trouble have I not had to lead you even to that length! Two years ago you desired one of your own standing; last year you would have accepted one of forty; now you are more reasonable, but you must make up your mind to go a little farther. If you listen to my advice, you will give yourself a yet wider field.'

'Anything rather than marry an old man.'

'At fifty a man can hardly be called old.'

'At fifty?' cried Mademoiselle Alphonsine, in a tone which revealed the antipathy felt by most young ladies of a certain age for men who are going down the hill; an antipathy, I grieve to say, most heartily reciprocated.

Madame d'Epenoy could not restrain a gesture of impatience.

'Are you relapsing into your idle dreams?' said she, somewhat sharply. 'Must I repeat the same thing to you a thousand times! As I have told you again and again, the presumption of these men is such, that, at the same age, in fact, they consider themselves our juniors; and many a man of fifty, whom I could name, would have the impertinence to consider you too old for him. It is scandalous and detestable, but so it is. Take, then, the world as you find it, and do not expect that it should make any exceptions in your favour. In your case, to be candid with you, the idea of a young husband will only lead you on from disappointment to disappointment—a romantic dream from which I hoped that M. Gastoul had completely aroused you.'

At the name of M. Gastoul, the green eyes of the spinster shot forth a glance of hatred, and her lips trembled with passion.

'I do not understand your allusion,' said she, with affected indifference.

'*Ah! ma chère, permettez,*' retorted Madame d'Epenoy, who, finding her pupil rebellious, had again recourse to her tone of sarcasm—'If you are so forgetful, I am not, and as your memory is at fault, you shall have the benefit of mine. Four years ago, M. Gastoul occupied all your thoughts; you spoke of no-

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thing else, and wherever he went, there were you always to be found. It was evident to the least clear-sighted that you had made up your mind to captivate and to marry him. The stake was well worth playing for;—he was rich, clever, and five or six years younger than yourself;—but, unluckily, your kind intentions in his favour met with the blackest ingratitude. That ill-mannered person had even the audacity to make a jest of your obvious inclination, and, to complete the measure of his impertinence, did he not take the liberty, three years since, to marry a young, charming, high-born wife, with a portion of three or four hundred thousand francs? This was, indeed, scandalous treatment, and, in your place, I would never forgive him.'

The vindictive expression assumed by Mademoiselle Alphonsine's countenance at the mere mention of M. Gastoul's name, appeared to denote this last recommendation as superfluous; but the ridicule of Madame d'Epenoy cut her vanity to the quick, and opened afresh the wound which for more than four years had rankled in her heart. She answered in a voice choked with suppressed passion, 'That Madame Gastoul is younger, richer, more beautiful than I, is a fact not to be disputed; nor will I deny that she has every advantage that I want, and that I should gain greatly by resembling her; nevertheless, all things considered, I am just as well satisfied to be without her powers of fascination, and remain as I am.'

'The fox in the fable again,' said Madame d'Epenoy, with a quiet smile.

Mademoiselle du Boissier smiled in return, with an air of disdain. 'I am not rich,' repeated she; 'I am not handsome, nor am I any longer in the prime of youth; but I have at least no *liaisons* of which I need be ashamed.'

In the heat of her anger she did not remember that the stone thus cast at Madame Gastoul fell heavily on the head of her protectress. Madame d'Epenoy, however, without appearing to see any personality in the accusation, quickly replied, 'Do you mean by that to insinuate that Madame Gastoul deceives her husband?'

'Ah, poor man!' cried Mademoiselle Alphonsine, with insulting pity.

'Listen to me for a moment, my dear,' resumed Madame d'Epenoy, seriously; 'that you should hate M. Gastoul for not having had the politeness to fall in love with you, I can understand and excuse; but his wife has never injured you, yet you detest her, if possible, more than you do him. You never allow an opportunity to speak ill of her to escape you; this is at the same time malicious and impolitic; malicious, inasmuch as Madame Gastoul's conduct affords no grounds for your accusation; and impolitic, because your censure is certain to be set down to the score of jealousy.'

'I jealous of that woman! Really, madame—'

'That woman, as you politely term her, is young, attractive, witty, (so report says,) and much courted in society; this alone is sufficient to excite the spite and envy of certain persons whom I will not describe. Now, what have you specifically to lay to her charge?'

'I! nothing whatever!' answered Mademoiselle du Boissier, drawling out her words affectedly; 'nothing in the world, I assure you; but I doubt whether her husband can say as much.'

'But this is very like a formal act of accusation. Come, my fair guardian of female morality, explain yourself. I have already heard that my son pays court to the lady in question; is it to this report that you allude? If so, conjectures, suppositions, hearsay, will not suffice; I must have facts—proofs. You have now gone too far to recede; speak then, I am ready to hear what you have to say.'

'You ask me for facts and proofs?' said Mademoiselle Alphonsine, gently.

'Yes—for ascertained facts and visible proofs.'

'Will you promise me not to repeat to any one what I am about to tell you? If I am to speak out, I must be well assured of your discretion; for I should be very sorry to take away Madame Gastoul's reputation.'

'Agreed,' said Madame d'Epenoy, drily; 'and if you are but half as discreet on the subject as I shall be, the secret will be well kept.'

'Well, then, madame,' continued Mademoiselle du Boissier, lowering her voice to impart solemnity to the communication, 'these are the facts and proofs, which must, I think, convince even you. I was yesterday at the private theatricals at the Hotel Castellane; Madame Gastoul was there also, and it so happened that we were seated next to each other. The heat was excessive and several people complained of it, my neighbour more than any. Suddenly I perceived that she grew very pale, and seemed about to faint. I supported her, and, with the assistance of one or two other ladies, she was led, or rather carried, into an adjoining room. There she lost all consciousness, and whilst the others were holding smelling-bottles to her nose, and loosening her dress, I took off her gloves in order to pat the palms of her hands. Will you believe me when ———?'

At the very crisis of her tale, Mademoiselle du Boissier was interrupted by a servant, who informed Madame d'Epenoy that the Marquis de Morsy requested to be admitted.

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'You can tell me the rest by-and-bye,' said the old lady; 'I cannot deny myself to M. de Morsy, who has come on business, and by my own appointment.'

'I will return to-morrow,' answered Mademoiselle du Boissier, taking the hint, and rising immediately. 'Adieu, my dear madame, I trust you will bear me no ill-will, should I have said anything to displease you.'

'None in the world; but where are you going now?' said Madame d'Epenoy, who saw her turning towards the bed-room door.

'I do not wish to meet M. de Morsy in the ante-room dressed as I am; I will slip out by the back stairs.'

'Why, he is fifty years old,' said Madame d'Epenoy, laughing.

'That is no reason for my scaring him with this unbecoming costume.'

As she uttered these words, which promised a speedy conversion to the sage maxims of her instructress, Mademoiselle du Boissier opened the bed-room door, at the very moment that the servant re-entered the drawing-room to announce M. le Marquis de Morsy.

BRANSCOMBE: A SCENE IN DEVON.

BY MAJOR CALDER CAMPBELL

EARTH is very beautiful! — the morning sun, just tipping
Verdant-cliffed Branscombe with a golden hue,
Seemeth from its nightly sleep to come forth thirstful, sipping
Exhalations from the streams and from the herbs fresh dew;
Three valleys fair, in gay green hills embedded,
A fanciful triangle, below me lie at ease;
Near yon humble church, where cliff and combe are wedded,
They meet like parted friends, — while skimmer thro' the trees
Three brooklets of the mountains,
That babble to the breeze!

Earth is very beautiful amid these steeps and valleys! —
Golden wheat now quivers, ripening in the sun;
Up yon hazled slope the farmer loudly rallies
Reapers to their morning task; lo! it is begun!
Wild flowers around their varied tints are showing —
Sweeps of yellow charlock athwart the fields are seen;
The scarlet hoods of poppies, 'mid dark green turnips glowing,
Are brighter than the ruby gems that deck an Indian queen;
Earth is very beautiful
Amid these valleys green;

Bursting, like snow-flakes, from the emerald hedges,
Bindweeds profusely thrust out their petals white;
Nightshade flowers, with centred gold and wings of purple edges,
Mix with gay convolvuli and vetches red and bright:
Blue blooms the succory, each bud than sapphire brighter,—
Purple-spiked wild thyme, in amethystine pride
Scatters aromatic scents—of bees the sweet inviter,
While topaz-like the agrimony's columns rise beside:—
Than BRANSCOMBE is no fairer place
In all this world wide!

Earth is very beautiful!—The sun of mid-day, pouring
Fervid blessings on its growth, now shines o'er Branscombe's vales;
I sit and listen to the waves beneath me loudly roaring.
And hear within the copses near no songs of nightingales:
No! 'tis the woodland thrush, whose music, richly voicing
Happy emotions, floats a choral flood!
I'll hasten from the shore to list to its rejoicing,
And in a leafy shroud me wrap, fast buried in a wood;
Its gushing song shall be my wine,
The wild flowers' scent my food!

Branscombe, Aug., 1841.

* '*Branscombe*' implies the meadowy vale among the hills: this beautiful parish is five miles east of Sidmouth.

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MEMOIRS OF AN ITALIAN EXILE.

BY ELI BLACKGOWN, D. D.

CHAPTER XVIII.

The Night Watch.

"Si fata fuissent
Ut caderem, meruisse manu."

THE clouds that overhang the city of London are privileged to let down one shower at least every day in the year. The clouds that float on the Italian skies are licensed to pour forth, in a few hours, as much rain as would suffice for a twelvemonth. Storms in Italy have all the suddenness and impetuosity that distinguished once, and are still said to characterize in that country, the passions of men. Huge dense clouds, in the shape of gigantic mountains, may be seen rising from every quarter of the horizon. They swell, they spread, they tower frowning and threatening aloft, they rush against each other like conflicting legions of phantoms. Darkness and silence are cast on the face of the creation. Then suddenly, as if at a given signal, the whole atmosphere is rent by blood-red flashes. Thunder and lightning hide the batling of elements from the gaze of stunned and dazzled mortals; and when the tempest is over, and they are finally enabled to recover from their bewilderment, the deluged fields, the drowned birds, the scattered foliage and shattered trees, are there to attest the violence of the storm, and justify their alarm.

There are streets at Naples, athwart which wooden bridges are thrown as across canals and torrents, and there are instances on record, when both these bridges and men, horses and carriages, have been swept away by the overwhelming *freshet*. I remember to have groped my way for nearly a quarter of an hour, completely blinded by a rapid succession of lightning that seemed to have set the whole firmament on fire. I have seen trees stripped of their foliage to the last bough, and the bare splintered old trunks smoking and smouldering as if fire had rained and not water, and the grass withered and blackened as if the lava of Vesuvius had swept over it.

Commotions of this nature, however more natural and frequent in the summer-time, will yet now and then visit our land even in the heart of winter; and the long drought which, contrary to all natural laws, had in the present instance lasted from Christmas to Midlent, prepared us for some calamitous reaction. The storm might, if it had chosen, probably have taken a more convenient opportunity than to fall upon us on our outset, unless, indeed, the tempest was intended as a sinister omen to frighten us back from our enterprise, or an ordeal of fire and water to test our warlike virtues and powers of endurance.

However this might be the case, it is certain that we marched on, in order and silence, with the steady and sullen determination of the Greek heroes of Homer. Before we were fairly out of town, our armour and equipment were thoroughly soaked through. The road in the country was turned into a vast canal; and as we waded through it, many a hapless wight slipped down from the footpath, and plunged headlong into the ditch. Above head, there was a pitched battle between all the angels and demons of Milton. The frequent pelting of hailstones, and the peals and flashes of heaven's red artillery, were meant, I suppose, to try how we could, in case of need, stand showers of bullets and roaring of cannon.

Manfully did we bear through it: no complaint or even murmur was heard, and the few stragglers that lagged behind, stopping at some of the frequent inns by the road-side, had no sooner swallowed their pint of wine than they overtook us, plashing and paddling through the miry water like a flock of wild geese.

Our road led straight to the hills in the direction of Montechiaro and Traversetolo; and at this place—twelve miles from Parma—we were to encamp for the night. We had scarcely marched for two hours, and the darkness of night, hastened by louring weather, was spreading fast over the wide level country, when a loud cry of 'Halt!' was thundered forth from our men in the rear.

The column halted of course, and we wondered what new incident had occasioned that interruption, when, behold! Professor Pascali driving his gig along our lines, and delivering a hasty and desultory harangue as he proceeded.

Professor Pascali belonged to, and was one of the best ornaments of, our medical faculty. He was, if I mistake not, a native of Reggio, and, as such, addicted to good cheer and good company; a man with a light head and a golden heart; the most thoughtless and blithesome of doctors, the best *connoisseur* in matter of wines, and whose young and comely waiting-maid was an object of envy to half the bachelors in town.

'My friends! young gentlemen!' he exclaimed, with a lusty voice, proceeding from a pair of lungs as inaccessible to cold or dampness as his heart was unassailable by care and sorrow—'Back, back, my good friends! It is useless for you to go farther;

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they have provided neither beds nor supper for you. They sent you off to starve with cold and hunger abroad, while they have accomplished a counter-revolution at home.'

'No supper! a counter-revolution!' vociferated the huddling multitude. 'Back, back to our town! Down with the brigands! Long live our glorious revolution!'

Tumult and confusion ensued. The leaders' voices were no longer listened to; and shouting, yelling, and swearing, the disorderly mass moved backwards with a unanimous start. To call every man back to his ranks would have been found impracticable. Each of them rushed on inconsiderately, with all the speed that the weariness of our previous march and the weight of our soaked accoutrements would allow.

A few words may be necessary to acquaint our readers with what had taken place at Parma during the short absence of its revolutionary champions.

The members of our provisional government, as soon as, by a successful stratagem, they had ridden themselves of the tumultuous youths who rebelled against reason and kicked against necessity, had resolved to carry on that darling scheme upon which their hearts were long since bent—that of saving their town from ruin.

They wished to spare us the evils and disasters of an Austrian invasion, which they thought they had not the least adequate means to resist; and they hoped to avert that calamity, by preparing the way for Maria Louisa's peaceful return, by a spontaneous re-instalment of her insignia and order, by a recall of her magistrates and officers, and by delivering into her hands, and recommending to her clemency, her repentant, humbled metropolis. In accordance with these views, they had struck the tri-coloured standard, dismissed the few remaining companies of stationary militia, marched into the main-square a battalion of their regular troops, who had been made to resume the ducal cockade, and proclaimed that the reign of anarchy was over, inviting every good citizen to return to his duty.

Thus would these honest and well-meaning men, no less than sincere and excellent patriots, out of mistaken charity for their country, have rendered themselves guilty of high treason, and basely betrayed the trust that the suffrage of their countrymen had vested in their hands.

Let us not, however, judge their conduct with harshness and prejudice. Every rational being must be fain to admit that circumstances bore an uncommonly dark and gloomy aspect; that effectual resistance was altogether out of the question: that it was not only utterly impracticable in itself, but fraught with dangers and evils, of which it would have been difficult to foresee the extent. Neither can any one doubt but that a prompt and complete submission might incline our exiled duchess to measures of mercy and forbearance. The gratification which that lady would have experienced on seeing herself restored to those glittering apartments from which not so much as a pin had been removed, the sight of her jewelled toilet, of her golden chair, of the famous cradle of the 'King of Rome,' and other trinkets, which the cares of our provisional rulers had duly rubbed, dusted, and altogether kept in a state of excellent preservation, could not fail to plead the cause of the rebels in her eyes. She would feel disposed to consider the whole matter as little more than a carnival frolic, and remembering that the day was not far back in the past when she was herself at the mercy of her people, she would be fain to exercise in our behalf 'that greatest and best privilege of royalty'—to forgive.

The line of conduct pursued by our government was, therefore, certainly the wisest and safest. But ought men who venture into open revolt only to think of safety, and always to follow the dictates of wisdom? Have they only homes, wives, and children to provide for? Owe they nothing to their own honour and the fair name of their country?

Is man always to yield without a struggle as soon as he despairs of success? should we ever have thought of laying down our arms ere something had been achieved which might, even in our defeat, command the respect of our enemy, and call forth universal sympathy?

Alas! it is of little avail at present to speculate on eventualities which were never to be realized. Our rulers were resolved upon submission, and aware of the impossibility of persuading, they left nothing unattempted to force their countrymen after their views.

Things had been brought to this point, when Professor Pascali, hoping to baffle their plan by our unlooked-for return, hastened on our footsteps to bring us back to the scene of those disgraceful transactions.

As we drew near town, some kind of hasty deliberation took place. The counter-revolution being by that time accomplished, we thought the brigands—by such an appellation each party designated its adversaries—the brigands would not fail to strengthen themselves against all chances of a reaction on our part, by garrisoning, barricading, and fortifying the town-gates. All our chances, therefore, lay in the speed and suddenness of our movement, by which we hoped to surprise them in the midst of their military preparations. It was unanimously resolved that

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town and citadel should be carried by storm, and every obstacle overcome at the point of the bayonet.

It rained meanwhile as merrily and lustily as if it never had rained. But as we arrived in sight of *Porta San Michele*, we were made aware of the inopportunity of our hostile intentions. The gate was wide open, and as we rushed in, with such a confusion that rather bespoke our military ardour than discipline, our eyes were gladdened by the sight of sentinels who still wore our own tricoloured badges, and our ears were greeted with the national war-cry.

The counter-revolution had been attempted and failed. Warily as their plans had been laid, our rulers little knew how to value the public spirit of the town which they had undertaken to subdue. The most fervent youths, those who had given them so much cause for uneasiness, were, indeed, absent, either having engaged in our expedition, or having, in compliance with their parents' and friends' entreaties, emigrated or absconded. But the populace, which in less than a month of loose government had been made to feel all the importance and dignity of mobocracy—that sovereign rabble, whose very existence is hardly suspected as long as it consents to sink down quietly in its courts and alleys, but whose voice is so tremendous, and its aspect so dismal, when it sallies forth from its lair —the populace remained, and could not be as easily tamed into submission as its rulers would, for its own sake, have desired.

Accustomed of late to assemble upon the square at every faint breath of novelty, it stood a silent but not passive spectator of the metamorphosis that was to transform a rebellious into a loyal, a Guelph into a Ghibeline, city. It beheld with amazement the white and red arms of Maria Louisa, which some provident person had, as it appeared, taken good care to shelter and preserve for the present opportunity, solemnly restored to their wonted places at the entrance of all the offices of state. It gazed with stupor upon those very soldiers with whom it had but yesterday *fraternized* over good cheer and wine at all the taverns and cellars about town, now marching upon the square with the ducal badge on their chacko, and the air of bravado and insolence on their countenance, striking the butt-end of their muskets on the pavement, and intimating to the crowd to draw back at the peril of their shins and toes.

The descendants of these doughty burghers, who in glorious republican times could boast of having routed the whole host of the second Frederick, could stand such a treatment no longer. The mob set up its tremendous war-whoop; it flung a shower of stones upon the well-mustered soldiery, and rushing upon them with a headlong desperate plunge, it wrenched from them swords and muskets, with that same unanimity, swiftness, and ease, with that same complete success, that signalised a similar exploit on the *Piazza di Corte* during the tumults of the memorable 13th of February.

How the routed troops were able to escape the vengeance of their exasperated conquerors I am at a loss to explain. The conflict went off, however, with no greater harm than a few scratches and bruises. Soon the victorious mob turned their wrath against the rulers from whom the counter-revolutionary orders were issued. They overtook in its flight the carriage that was bearing away the members of the self-deposed provisional government, forced them respectfully but sullenly back to their palace, where they were held as prisoners, and adding to their number two other younger, bolder, and more popular individuals that were chosen on the spot, bade them sit once more at the helm of public affairs, and issue proclamations and orders, according as it pleased their mobocratic majesty to dictate.

Hence the populace went forth in various detachments to secure the town gates, the citadel, and all other important posts. It ferreted out Major Rolfi, the hapless officer who had led the battalion into the square, and who, it was asserted, had been heard to order his followers to lower their bayonets and fire against the people. They found him, they dragged him along the streets, loaded with chains, and overwhelmed him with kicks and cuffs to their hearts' content. They would infalliby have destroyed him altogether, had not some of their demagogues, most probably out of charity and humanity, suggested the propriety of casting the felon into a dungeon for that night, thence to be dragged forth, and, with due form and solemnity, tried, confessed, and hanged on the morrow.

In the midst of this wild popular exultation we entered town. The victory had already been secured to our side, and all that remained for us was to try to allay the fury of the justly-incensed and flushed multitude; so that, after a short rejoicing and fraternizing with them, the jaded adventurers retired for their night's rest, giving up all projects of their intended expedition into Romagna, and carrying their disappointment and dissatisfaction, together with their hunger, thirst, and wet clothes, into the sanctuary of their respective homes.

Had things been suffered to take a different course—the reader knows how I love to

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dwell on remote probabilities—had the good doctor Pascali been less eager and zealous in setting out after us, before that popular farce had been drawn to a close, or had his grey mare broken one of her legs, or his gig one of its wheels, so that our march had proceeded uninterrupted that night, however soaked, however houseless and supperless we must have slept at the Traversetolo, on the morrow we would have ventured across the hilly part of the Modenese territory, and carved our way to Bologna, where our timely arrival, especially if backed by our regular troops and artillery, might have infused a new spirit into our wavering brethren of Romagna, and—who knows?—perhaps turned the whole aspect of things.

I had frequent occasions to talk on the subject with some of my friends, then residing at Bologna, who assured me that our movement had been announced in that town, and our arrival looked for every hour; and that nothing more effectually contributed to hasten the downfall of their hopes, than their disappointment at our non-appearance.

Providence had decreed otherwise!

The storm which had been accessory to all these momentous transactions, within as well as without the town walls, never abated till late after midnight. The morning arose calm, pure and balmy, breathing the peace of heaven upon the ravaged and flooded land, and into the hearts of its inhabitants. No tumult of warring elements, no clash of human passions, can resist the ineffable smile of an Italian sunrise. Plunged into the deeper abyss of misery, man only needs to raise his eyes heavenward to feel sure that all mortal troubles have their beginning and end upon earth, and that evil has no power above the region of the storms. There reigned a stillness in the well-washed streets of our sunny metropolis, that neither the rioting of the loosened mob nor the terrors of threatened invasion had power to disturb. People spoke as calmly and softly in broad daylight, in busy squares and markets, as they would have done in consecrated groves silvered by the midnight moon. All the demons of hell could not have roused a popular tumult that morning; no man could have found in his heart sufficient hatred to grasp the hilt of his dagger, or look at the priming of his gun—none could have been so deeply plunged into despair as to fasten a rope round his neck for self-destruction. Those holy sunbeams were proof against human evil-mindedness or despondency. Every one was full of God and his mercy. There was a hymn in every man's eye—a thanksgiving in every man's heart. All passions were as if spell-bound in that quiet entrancement of joy.

So much for fair weather in Italy!

And when our people finally proceeded to business, it was with that same gentle and resigned calmness that pervaded the whole of creation. The conquerors of the evening appeared before the still terrified and imprisoned members of government, cap-in-hand, dignified but respectful, and entreated them to lay aside all apprehension, to pardon their roughness and storminess of the preceding day, and to resume the management of state, providing for public safety in that manner that appeared to their judgment most expedient and opportune.

Government answered by thanking and praising their conduct—protested that their orders had been either misinterpreted or violated by their executors—that whenever an opportunity should offer itself, they would give them fresh proofs of their readiness to die for their country; but that, as yet, danger was remote and uncertain. They exhorted the people, therefore, tranquilly to retire to their dwellings, to restore peace and confidence into the bosom of their alarmed families.

With this the many-headed monster, always willing to be led by the nose, was for the while satisfied. The multitude withdrew and dispersed, order was re-established, and the members of government called for their breakfast.

Major Rolfi, the only victim that popular indignation was still unwilling to release, was dragged from his dungeon at the Town Hall, and removed to a more dreary cell in the state prison at St. Elizabeth's. The sight of the trembling wretch, cowering and shrinking before the gaze of that very populace upon whom he would scornfully have trampled on the eve, had nearly rekindled the wrath of his adversaries. One of them, a law-student, by name Octavio Fichi, whose younger brother had been slightly hurt by a random shot during the melée of the preceding evening, now dashing madly through the crowd, and making his way up to the prisoner, dealt him with his dagger a blow that, notwithstanding the timely interference of the bystanders, crimsoned the sky-blue coat of the ill-fated major.

This was the first and last act of violence that interrupted the quiet and harmony of that blessed morning. The prisoner arrived, still safe, though not quite sound, at the place of his destination. Three young lawyers were appointed by the people to draw up his act of accusation, and whilst everything was getting ready for his trial, the offender was lost sight of and forgotten, till at the close of the revolution he was dragged from his den by the Austrians.

In such a state of things a few days were suffered to elapse. Austrian forces crowded

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all round the confines of our narrow territory. We had them only twelve miles from us, on the north, all along the banks of the Po: sixteen miles from our gates westward, on the Arda, and only five on the east, on the bridge of the Enza. The project of leading our forces to Romagna had been given up as impracticable ever since our first unsuccessful attempt. Francis of Este had armed the wild tribes of the Apennine into a lawless guerilla, and a march along the hills would have been more disastrous than an open onset against the Austrians on the plain.

Yet there reigned peace and tranquillity, and if not actually sanguineness, at least apathy and security; in truth, notwithstanding the flagrant breach of the non-intervention at Modena, men were still to be found willing to dwell on that baneful delusion. With all the blind dotage of stale erudition, they resorted to the memorials of feudal times to prove how the Austrians were perfectly right to meddle with the affairs of Modena, that duchy having in all times been considered as an imperial fief, while they could by no means extend the same authority either on the papal states or on the duchy of Parma, which had ever been in the gift of the church. They forgot that not only such feudal dependencies, but even the dignity, name, and the very shadow of the Roman or German empire, had long since ceased to exist—that Austria had solemnly, though only nominally, renounced all sovereignty over the so-called independent Italian states, both in 1745 and 1814, and that if she availed herself of the right of the strongest to come to the aid of her ally of Modena, she would have little scruple equally to re-enthrone the duchess of Parma, and march to the rescue of the pope.

All men, however, were no longer the dupes of the specious arguments of the non-intervention. But all stood equally silent; either being aware that the opportunity had been suffered to escape, and that it was now too late to come to any decisive resolution, or feeling that public spirit had too suddenly died off, to expect that any bold measure might be manfully seconded.

Hence all mutual confidence, disinterestedness, and devotedness, was at an end. Egotism, which, in the first ebullition of revolutionary success, had been laid asleep, now resumed its wonted ascendency. It was 'every one for himself, and God for us all.'

> 'E allor siam giunti a disperar saluto
> Quando spera ciascun di campo solo!'

Many of the most active and ardent retired in disgust and despondency; some to the quiet and solitude of their country-seats, others asked for passports to Piedmont, where they were sure, they said, to meet the French armies hastening forward in vindication of the non-intervention. The streets became silent and solitary. The national guard slackened in their zeal and diligence—in short, the enemy had only to show himself to be sure of success.

On the evening of Saturday, the 12th of March, 1831, I was seated on a sofa by the side of Marina, in the drawing-room of Judge Cornaro, in that very room, and on that same sofa, where at that hour, without the interference of extraordinary causes, I was invariably sure to be found. The judge and three of his friends were busy at their rubber. Mary Ann was throwing her arms round her mother's neck for a parting kiss previous to her going to bed, when cries of 'To arms! to arms!' were heard at some distance. I jumped up, pressed Marina's hand, received from Mary Ann the kiss that was intended for her mother, and in a few seconds I was out in the street.

The whole town was in arms—for the last time in arms. People were drawing in various groups to the square. The cause of alarm was soon known. A young militiaman, out of breath, and minus his hat, was bawling out a few words to the gaping multitude. He came, he said, from the bridge of the Enza, where he was stationed with twenty others at the outposts. The Austrians had fallen upon and murdered their sentinel, and taken their quarters by surprise. They were in full march against Parma. He had heard their measured tramp close to his heels all along his precipitate retreat. They must be by this time at the gate.

'To the gate!—to the gate!' cried the people; 'we will all die on the gate of our city!'

Hence they started: wide and broad as the *Strada San Michele* was, it could hardly be a sufficient outlet for the swelling throng. The *Porta San Michele* was only secured by an iron railing, after the style of the Parisian *barrières*. Two sentinels on duty paced up and down before it with great composure and stateliness; all otherwise was dark, deserted, and silent. The people invaded the vast avenue, and hurried up the broad flight of stairs leading to the high bastions which flanked the gate on both sides. There was a deep, universal silence—not a footstep was heard, not a bayonet was seen gleaming through the gloom of night. They looked at each other mystified and perplexed.

'It was a false alarm! where is Rotti, the raven of the evil news? We owe him a ducking for the fool's errand he has sent us upon!"

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With these words, and other worse jokes, the crowd prepared to disperse.

'One moment—yet one moment, my friends!' cried I to some of the bystanders. 'It may be a false report, and there is perhaps no danger to apprehend. Still there can be no harm in doubling the guard at the gate—in sending our patrols round the circuit of the walls.'

The proposal was acceded to. Volunteers stepped forward from every part. I was by acclamation appointed commanding officer at the gate, and empowered to select my men. Other companies were drawn up for other purposes, and the rest of the crowd retired.

As soon as silence and quiet was restored, I got a broadsword that lay in the guard-room, called out and mustered my forty companions, and delivered an appropriate exhortation.

'Li miei compagni feci io si acuti,
Per questa orazion picciola ch' io feci
Che appena poscia gli avrei ritenuti.'

Hence I proceeded to give the opportune instructions for the night. The night was darker than I ever remember to have seen before or afterwards, and ears were of greater service than the keenest eyes. I ordered the lamps to be put out, as only serving to expose us without aiding our sight. I sent for refreshments and wine from the nearest tavern, and thereby restored the strength of my champions, as by my words I had raised their spirits and strengthened their virtue.

Good, hearty young fellows! They all belonged to the labouring classes, and were perfectly unknown to me. But my name and person were familiar to them, and they relied upon my discernment and steadiness with unlimited confidence. Good young fellows! I might have led them against millions!

The gate was, as I said, only protected by an iron railing, and looked rather like a toll-gate, or the fence of a garden, than the entrance to a fortified town. All along the main avenue there rose two spacious *trottoirs*, or side-walks, and these were terminated by smaller iron doors, usually opened during night-time, for the admittance of travellers on foot. On each side the gate was protected by the lofty bastions and the guard-rooms; custom and other offices were excavated into the very earth of the bulwarks. These bastions, which were now converted into a public promenade, might, indeed, if well lined with artillery, have offered a serious resistance. But cannons there were none, and the walls, at no great distance, were in such a state of dilapidation, that horses might almost have climbed them. Under such circumstances, it was obvious that the best chances of opposing the enemies, if any were indeed advancing, would have been to meet them on the field. No man, since the death of our quixotic hero Octavio Farnese, ever thought of making a fortress either of Parma or of its dismantled citadel.

Outside, the road spread straight across the open meadow-land, wide and spacious enough to admit more than ten carriages abreast. At half a mile distance the sight was partly confined by a triumphal arch erected—I never knew in what epoch or for what solemnity. Before it came to the arch, the road was crossed by two branch-roads, leading the one northward to Brescello and the Po, the other towards the south, to Traversetolo and the Apennine. As far as eye could reach, the plain extended in all directions, without a house or a tree, clear and smooth as a billiard-table.

Yet chance had placed at the command of that gate a man the least willing to admit an invader; and as I grasped the hilt of my sword, I felt my heart agitated by a conflict of passions, acknowledging the irrationality of a serious resistance, yet dangerously inclined to jeopardise my life no less than that of my companions, no less than the safety of all.

My brothers in arms shared my enthusiasm, and God knows that nothing would have been easier than to rouse a thousand like them from their treacherous slumbers, who would never have suffered the Austrians to advance without trampling on heaps of their devoted bodies.

Meanwhile we had stood watching and waiting. Two of my young volunteers had been stationed on the bastions; another threw himself on the cold pavement to catch even the faintest sound. He had not been long in that posture, when up he started, and with a sudden movement he clapped his hands and cried out,

'Hark! a footstep!'

And a footstep, to be sure, it was: the sound became audible, though only at intervals, waving to and fro, according to the ebbing and flowing of the still lazy atmosphere; for a moment we might have confounded it with the beating of our anxious hearts, but by degrees it became more and more distinct. It sounded on the well-macadamized road like the distant sound of a muffled drum. It was some one running towards the gate.

'Chi va là?' cried our man from the bastion.

'Amici!' shouted back the poor fellow, who was not well sure whether the national watchword, 'Italia e libertà' was any longer safe, and, on his drawing up to the foot-path

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door, we recognized one of our militiamen at the outposts.

The door was opened for his admittance. He told his sorrowful tale, and had leave to go home.

The tidings he brought confirmed my worst apprehensions. The Hungarians had indeed crossed the Enza, and lost no time in advancing against us.

Presently my man on the ground jumped on his feet.

'Hark! the tramp of horses!'

And horses, no doubt, were coming. They might be heard at several miles' distance. They came from the north, from the road of Brescello. On they dashed at full gallop, like a charging squadron, and we could plainly discern the clash of dangling scabbards.

'Hungarians, by heaven!' I exclaimed. 'My friends, look to your guns.'

The young fellows cocked their muskets, and laid their muzzles on the bars of the iron railing.

'Chi va là?' roared our stentor from the top of the bastion, as the galloping cavalry issued into the main road at about a quarter of a mile from the gate. The horsemen halted. One of them rode forward alone.

'Open, for heaven's sake!' he cried, in a husky voice, as a man who had ridden himself out of breath; 'we are dragoons and national cavalry from the outposts at the Po; a squadron of Hungarians are riding close after us.'

The gate was thrown open. The horsemen (four only in number, notwithstanding all their noise) were hastily admitted. Still no Austrians were heard, either on horseback or foot. Presently our long-eared scout stood up amongst us.

'Hark! carriage-wheels!'

'Impossible!' we all replied; 'they must be the wheels of artillery.'

But no: the sound drew near, too light and easy to be mistaken for the heavy rolling of a piece of ordnance. The advancing conveyance is descried winding its way to the gate, dark and ghost-like, like the chariot of Hecate.

'Alto là! chi va là?' shouts our sentry on the bastion. The carriage stops—a man alights, and walks up to the little door.

'For mercy's sake, let us in for a few minutes,' he said; 'the countess Stabili has been suddenly taken ill at her villa, and sends in great haste for Doctor Rossi' (the ablest accoucheur in town.)

'The countess Stabili should have chosen a more auspicious night for her confinement,' I replied, as I opened the door with my own hands. Then suddenly drawing my sword, and seizing the fellow by the throat, till his eyes started from their sockets, 'you rascally traitor,' cried I, 'you are no better than an Austrian spy.'

The countess Stabili was one of Maria Louisa's ladies of the bed-chamber, and I was, perhaps, not wrong in my conjecture that the Austrians had resorted to that stratagem to ascertain what resistance they were likely to meet with. Moreover, that night I acted after the impulse of the moment, and instinct served me instead of reflection.

'You wretch, you brigand! you scoundrel,' I continued, warming as I spoke; 'were I to cut your throat on the spot, you would have only what you deserve. But I will not stain my hands in your cowardly blood. Here, my friends, pinion his arms as fast as a Bologna sausage; shut him up in the *cachot* of the guard-room. To-morrow at sunrise we will have him hung up on the battlements of yonder bastion.'

It was no sooner said than done. The man, astounded by my brusque reception, offered no resistance, and was led out. The carriage waited for his return for about half an hour, then slowly drove off.

In like manner others of our luckless sentinels at the outposts arrived, and were safely housed. They all had left the Austrians at the distance of four—three—two miles, yet no Austrians appeared.

About midnight, however, our people were nearly all in: the road became more deserted, and nothing interrupted the stillness of our watch.

I took advantage of this interval of truce, appointed a lieutenant that was to command in my stead, gave orders that no man should be admitted during my absence, and, promising to be back in less than half an hour, I walked to the palace of government; our rulers—I owe them this justice—were at their post. I found them seated in that same cabinet where I had already repeatedly stood before them, and almost always as a bearer of evil news. They appeared to be busy destroying heaps of state papers that lay in mighty confusion on their table.

'My lords, they are coming!'

They hung down their heads, and answered not.

'The Austrians are coming, my lords!' I repeated, 'what are your lordships pleased to order?'

'To order, my son?' answered Da Costa, with an accent of bitter consternation. 'If the Austrians are indeed advancing, it belongs to them henceforth to dictate.'

'Think again, sir,' I replied. 'Would you wish to let them in at this hour of night, that they might take advantage of darkness and confusion to pillage the town?'

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'My dear De Negri, have we power to prevent them from getting in at any hour they please?'

'I know not that. I see that, notwithstanding their numbers, they are overawed by our show of defence, and dare not to follow up their advantage.'

'Heaven be praised for that!' said Da Costa. 'We shall have leisure to destroy these fatal documents that might otherwise be brought forward as an evidence against us, and against the best of you. Farewell, my brave youth,' continued the old man, rising from his seat and laying his hand on my shoulder, 'Lose no time in absconding, or otherwise providing for thy safety. They will be sure to search for thee. Heaven protect thee!'

'Amen, my lord,' I coolly replied; 'but I am wanted at the gate, where I am *capo-posto*, and cannot let my comrades perish without me. Once more, my lords, I ask for your orders.'

'Well, then, sir!' exclaimed Count Carmagnola with his wonted pride, 'withdraw your men from the gate, and bid them disperse.'

'They would not obey, my lord; no more would I. Such orders are inconsistent with the honour of a soldier. As long as the last of us breathes, the Austrians enter not. If it is your mind to surrender, do it yourselves. We are placed there to fight, and not to capitulate.'

'Alas, poor De Negri!' interposed Da Costa, 'fighting and treating are equally out of the question with us. Were we to send our messenger, the Austrians would shoot him as a brigand ere he opened his mouth. Believe me, our safety lies in a prompt, unconditional submission. Give the enemy even the slightest pretext—fire only one gun, and our town will be a heap of ruins.'

'Nay, if our case be so desperate, *extremis malis extrema remedia*. Wake up all the national guards, and ring the alarm-bell.'

'Madman!' again cried Carmagnola. 'You are young—have you no mother or sisters?'

I stood silent. Mother I indeed had none: but my poor three sisters, and another purer, and to me dearer being, were now, perhaps, slumbering in happy security, who within a few hours might awake among the horrors of a plundered city. I shuddered, but answered calmly—

'I will go and call up a few of my friends. I must see what they think on the subject.'

Having said this, I left them. I made my way towards the *Strada Santa Lucia*, and was soon near home. I stopped not at my door, but at the house opposite, and knocked lustily.

'Who is there?' cried a female voice from the attics.

'Pippo Galli!' I exclaimed. 'Call up Pippo. Tell him De Negri wants him.'

'Signor Pippo is not in, sir,' cried the housemaid, 'nor has been in all night.'

I walked on: not many steps from that was the house of Count Berardi. There I repeated my summons.

'What is the matter?' bawled out the count himself, who had just risen from bed.

'Dress up in haste, and come out, count—the Austrians are at our gates.'

'The Austrians be d——d,' replied the rude man; 'it was all a false alarm. Go to bed, and be d——d to you.'

So saying he closed the window. I continued hammering without mercy, and calling out with all the might of my lungs, in vain. The count, I afterwards learned, had been at the tavern with his boon companions till late, and had been carried home dead drunk.

'For the sake of humanity,' cried a piteous voice from an adjoining window, 'cease your infernal noise. My poor wife is on her deathbed, and you will scare her passing soul from her body.'

I dropped the knocker, and walked grumbling away.

'There is no use in losing time from door to door,' thought I: 'let us see what the alarm-bell will do.'

I walked to the *Duomo*, and stood before the oaken door of the huge square *Campanile*. The door had no knocker, but I shook it with right good will. No one answered my summons, and I was about to give up in despair, under the impresson that the tower was uninhabited, when a tasselled nightcap and the well-known cadaverous face of the sexton and bell-ringer, peeped out at the loop-holes.

'Fire, fire, *Campanaro! Campana a martello*. Toll your biggest bell for your life.'

'But, your honour, I see no fire. Pray your honour, whereabout is the fire?'

'Ring all the bells in your belfry, you lazy dog, or I'll wring your ears off your head.'

'Softly, dear sir,' quoth the man with a provoking coolness; 'I may ring no bells, you know, without an order from the sacristan.'

'And where the devil is the sacristan?'

'He is sleeping with his housemaid, near San Beneditto, at the other end of the town.'

'Devils and furies!' I cried in a towering rage, grasping one of my pistols, and aiming it at the night-capped head. 'Toll your bells, or I'll shatter your brains.'

Head, nightcap, and tassel, immediately disappeared.

'Toll, campanaro, in God's name, toll, or

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I'll set fire to the tower and burn you, you old owl, in your nest.'

No answer; threats and entreaties were equally wasted. The fellow felt safe in his fortress, and laughed at my impotent fury.

Believe it who may, the thought that there were other steeples and other bells never crossed my mind. I gave up all hopes of rousing the town to arms, and returned in a state of distraction to my friends at the gate. I found my friends safe at their post, where during my absence they had suffered no interruption. No incident of importance occurred till day-break.

The night had been dry, but slightly overcast, and the thin haze that, almost imperceivable, had rested on our atmosphere, was gradually drifted off by the first break of the morning breeze. A few white streaks of dawning light, in the shape of thin and faint comet trains, gradually dispelled the darkness of night, and enabled us to descry a huge dense mass slowly and silently moving towards us. The first alarm being given by our sentinels, we all rushed to arms. My men were drawn up in a line along the wall of the bulwark, that afforded them at least a precarious protection, but I stood alone in the midst of the road, with drawn sword, close to the iron rails.

No sooner had the large phalanx caught the first sight of us, just as it issued from under the triumphal arch above mentioned, than it halted and stood immovable. Their ranks could be no less than fifty abreast, and they stood close to each other with that perfect order and steadiness for which German soldiers are justly celebrated.

They stood immovable—and as I gazed upon them with wonder and awe, I could not help wishing that a couple of our howitzers were levelled against them on the bastions, and that a few scores of our young *tirailleurs* were by my side, so that, be the consequences what they might, we could, at least, before we yielded, have the satisfaction of seeing a few of them writhing and sprawling in the dust.

But our cannons were resting on the square of the citadel, and our friends sleeping in their beds.

The hostile mass continued to stand still for about a quarter of an hour, during which darkness gave way before the glorious light of morn.

At last they came to a decisive resolution. The Tyrolese sharp-shooters were ordered to advance.

Forward they came, spreading in a broad line over the whole extent of the meadows with a mind to give the escalade, while only four of them, most probably forlorn hopes, marched slowly but fearlessly on the main road.

They had not proceeded many rods when they lowered their rifles, and levelled them to my breast.

Then, I confess, and only for the first time during that eventful night, I felt my mouth bitter, and a shiver ran through my bones. There was no mistaking the cowardly sensation. It was as nearly akin to fear as any human feeling could well be. I had heard a great deal about the unerring aim of a Tyrolese rifle, and I felt that, had I had four lives, I stood on the brink of eternity.

Yet, God is my witness, I stirred not, shrank not. I gazed steadfastly on the deadly muzzles, waiting almost with impatience that they should pour forth my death-warrant.

Don Quixote, awaiting the spring of the royal lion at the door of his cage, was only a faint image of my vain foolhardiness, as I stood erect before the closed gate, my countenance beaming, and my naked blade gleaming in the morning ray.

'Sir, sir, shall I fire?' whispered my sentinel on the bastion with admirable coolness.

'God forbid!' I hastily replied, envying in my heart the intrepidity of that rare fellow, who would not have hesitated to set fire to a mine that would have blown up him and all of us in a few seconds.

And yet what was to be done? Waste the few lives of my companions and my own, with the certainty that the most dire calamities to our town would be the consequence of my rashness? Yield, and take to our heels after that vain bravado, and cover my name with ignominy? I felt that I had carried the joke too far, and that it was impossible to withdraw, both with honour and life.

In this emergency I had no better wish than that the Tyrolese should take a good aim and free me from perplexity. But the Tyrolese seemed seized with a similar irresolution—at the distance of perhaps fifty yards they stopped. Perhaps they felt that, few and helpless as we were, we were yet too many for them. Perhaps, notwithstanding their venturesome character, they stood in some panic-dread of an ambuscade. Perhaps they wished to give time to their comrades to climb the dismantled walls, and harass us in our rear. Perhaps, also, finally, they felt some reluctance to murder a man, apparently a madman, in cold blood.

The fact is, they stopped, and stood always with their pieces steadily turned against me, whilst my faithful sentinels on the bastions equally levelled their muskets against them, and the huge mass of the Austrians was seen moving forward at a slow and menacing pace.

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Things were in this state, when new characters made their appearance on the stage.

RESPONSE TO MRS. ABDY'S 'WHO LOVES THE GIFTED?'

BY MRS. EDWARD THOMAS.

'Who loves the gifted?'—They, the gifted too!
In this, our classic region, not a few.
Methinks I see Apollo's glorious band,
By amity link'd cordial hand in hand,
A mighty phalanx, marshall'd in array
To chase chaotic ignorance away,
Having quaff'd deeply the Pierian spring
That taught of old the sons of Greece to sing.
Hath not each child of Genius a claim
On thee, thou gifted one! long dear to fame?
Thou feel'st no envy;—other poets' lays
Partake with thine an equal meed of praise!
O, all must love them, for they do impart
The dearest lessons to the froward heart,
Making it gracious, pitiful, humane,
Prompt to assuage, but ne'er inflict a pain,
And raise the base to the high pinnacle
From which, with porcine dulness, late they fell.
Who loves thee not?—O! not one heart that knows
The tenderness with which thine own o'erflows,
But must adore thee—thou! so womanly
In all thy chaste and winning minstrelsy!

Let not thy sweet muse sing so sad a strain,
That they, the gifted, are but born to pain!
What! shall the holiest boon God can bestow
Warm, like a foster'd adder, for their woe?—
The spark ethereal—the ray divine—
Kindled in heaven, on earth serene to shine,
Be but a fierce, a meteoric glare,
To light its fever'd victims to despair?
No! it shall glow a pure empyrean flame,
Unclouded, unextinguish'd, fed by Fame,
(As virgins feed those lamps on Vesta's fane
That know no dimness, that *must* know no wane,)
While radiations from that sacred fire
Shall 'lumine those now struggling to aspire
To the Parnassian height, whose devious way
Demands indeed such strong, unflickering ray,
Yet thou, who hast the topmost summit gain'd,
(Forgotten *now* each weary step that pain'd,)
Must be elate to join the sons of song,
And share the glories that to them belong;
Marking the chroniclers who *never* lie,
Writing their records for posterity;
Numb'ring the poets, as the tribes of old
Number'd the chosen, by the angel told,
On their bright foreheads setting God's own seal,
That all their glorious destiny should feel.—
Upon the Poet's brow that seal shall shine—
It stamped a Hemans', Landon's, and shall *thine!*

TALES OF THE PUMP-ROOM.

No. IV.

OTHELLO.

The theatre was filled to overflowing: a newly-engaged singer played Don Giovanni. The pit, seen from above, looked in its heaving motion like an unquiet sea; while the gay scarfs and feathers of the ladies glanced like gold and silver fishes amid the darkling ocean. The front boxes were gayer than usual, as a brief court mourning, which cast its shadow over the early part of the winter, was just over; and this evening rich turbans, gay plumes, and many coloured shawls for the first time again appeared.

Brilliant, however, as was the *coup d'œil* afforded by the whole dress circle, the crowning gem in this diadem of beauty was unquestionably the happy combination of dignity and loveliness, which, from the grand ducal box, cast pleased and friendly glances over the bright world around and beneath. The gazer felt constrained to wish that fair young creature had been less highly born; so far more fitted to inspire love than distant veneration, did the blooming cheek and open brow, mild eye, sweet mouth, and almost childish expression appear. And, strange to say, as if not only cognizant of, but a sharer in the treasonable wish, the very dress of the Princess Sophia harmonized with this picture of innocent natural loveliness—so completely had she resigned to the bright bevy of ladies around every semblance of superfluous ornament.

'How full of life! how happy she does seem!' exclaimed a stranger in one of the first tier of boxes to the Russian envoy, who stood behind him with his opera glass fixed on the princess; 'when she smiles, and drops her speaking eye for a moment, and then looks up with such an indescribably winning expression—and when she flourishes with such graceful elegance that pretty little hand, do you not feel as if hearing, even at this distance, her playful questions and original remarks?'

''Tis wonderful,' was the not very pertinent reply of the ambassador.

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'And yet,' continued the stranger, turning for elucidation to the envoy's lady, 'this beaming sunshine is, you say, no more than a mask; and she who wears it a prey to bitter anguish—a victim—surely a gay and blooming one—to unhappy love. Do, my dear madam, confess that you are only trying to mystify me, to enhance the interest I cannot help taking in that heavenly young creature.'

'Mon Dieu, baron!' exclaimed the lady, shaking her head reproachfully, 'are you yet unconvinced? Honour bright, all is exactly as I have told you; she loves, and beneath her station. I have it from a lady whom nothing of the kind escapes. And why should it surprise you that a princess, trained from her childhood to representation, should have tact sufficient to blind the world to so unbecoming a flirtation?'

'I cannot fathom it,' muttered the stranger, musing to himself; 'I cannot put it together! such gaiety, such apparently unforced joyousness, with a secret, unfortunately-placed attachment! indeed, my good madam, I cannot comprehend it.'

'But why should she not be cheerful, baron? she little dreams that her uncourtly predilection is known to a single human being—her lover, too, is near.'

'Her lover near! for pity's sake, madam, point me out the happy man.'

'What an indecent request!' exclaimed the ambassadress—'even if the lady of the bedchamber had not sworn me to secresy. No, no, friend—you may feel tempted to repeat in Warsaw what you have seen and heard here—so no names, if you please. To mention names in such affairs is always dangerous—and nothing annoys my husband half so much.'

The overture drew near to its close; the tones of the orchestra waxed louder in proportion, and the eyes of the spectators were riveted—to have a peep at the new Don Juan—on the stage. But the stranger in the box of the Russian embassy had neither ear for Mozart, nor glance for the new performer; he saw only the beautiful scion of royalty, in whose speaking eyes and sweetly parted lips he sought, with ever-deepening interest, to read the history of her clandestine attachment. Her female companions, young and old, had ceased their conversation, and were absorbed in the music; but Sophia's eyes were turned from the stage, and explored with searching gaze the crowded house for some well-known but missing object.

'That gaze is for her lover,' mused the now silent stranger. 'How simply it trails along the lines of upturned faces, till resting on one beloved and privileged being, it can convey to him, and him alone, with the freemasonry of love, a thousand kind and tender greetings!' Just then, a beautiful blush flitted across Sophia's countenance! her chair was hastily pushed back—her head turned with feigned carelessness towards the box-door. It opened, and a tall, splendid looking young man entered, and paid his compliments to the grand duchess, the mother of the youthful princess. Her daughter played, as if unconscious, with the eye-glass in her hand; but the stranger needed no prophet to inform him that he saw before him the happy man.

The face was as yet turned from him; but the figure and air of the young man struck him as already familiar. The elder princess seemed to have addressed a remark to her daughter, whose reply, to judge from the bright smile which accompanied it, and the laughter which it occasioned, must have had in it something piquant. The young man turned suddenly round, and 'Heavens! Count Zroniefsky!' exclaimed the stranger, so loud and anxiously, that the ambassador was frightened from his proprieties, and his wife, sharing his alarm, seized her guest unconsciously by the arm, and dragged him down on his seat.

'For God's sake keep quiet, or we shall have a scene!' whispered the lady indignantly; 'the people right and left of us are all staring, and but for the fortunate screeching just then of the trumpets and French horns right below us, all the world must have heard you name Zroniefsky. What can be your tie to the count? You *must* know that we avoid his acquaintance.'

'How can I be aware,' rejoined the stranger, 'whom you honour or not with your acquaintance, seeing I have not been more than three hours in the town? But why have you put your ban on the person in question?'

'Of his footing with our government you surely cannot be ignorant,' said the ambassador. 'He is a marked man, and you may judge how annoying it is to me to have him for ever here. He has had the effrontery to get himself presented at court, so that we are always meeting, while circumstances require that we should remain strangers to each other. This is awkward enough; but, to mend the matter, I am desired from headquarters to find out how he manages to live in such style, when his estates are all confiscated, and I have no clue whatever to assist me. You are acquainted with him, baron?'

The stranger lost the greater part of this diplomatic communication, for his eyes and mind were fixed on the ducal box, watching how, during his chit-chat with the duchess and her ladies, the speaking glances of Zroniefsky held converse with the reciprocally-expressive ones of the beautiful creature beside him. The curtain suddenly rose, the

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count left the box, and the stranger could hear and reply to the reiterated whisper of the envoy—

'You are acquainted, I believe, with this count?'

'I served with him in the Polish lancers.'

'Ah, true! he was once attached to the French army. Did you see much of him? are you aware of his resources?'

'I saw little of him,' replied the stranger, 'except when we were brought together in the field, and know nothing about him except that he is a brave soldier and most capital officer.'

The envoy either was satisfied with what he heard, or unwilling to commit himself by farther inquiries; so the conversation dropped, and his guest seemed absorbed in the business of the stage. His thoughts were, however, very differently occupied, and the fate of his poor friend—for such had Zroniefsky, while comrades in arms, really been—painfully engrossed his mind. 'So fortune has not yet done alternately luring and disappointing him! Poor fellow! As a mere boy he fought for freedom with Kosciusko, and freedom and Kosciusko have long since found a common grave! In youth, glory was his idol, but the eagles in whose wake he so proudly followed, lie soiled in the dust; and now love, from whose wiles a sterner mistress long preserved him, has stolen upon his manhood, and placed his fatal prize so high, that he must either resign it or perish!'

It was from a reverie which not all the tumult of applause at the conclusion of the act could dispel, that the envoy sought, two or three times, in vain, to rouse his guest, by telling him that the grand duchess had inquired about him, professing herself acquainted with some branch or other of his family, and that the inquiry must be followed up by his immediate presentation.

The stranger felt himself blush; his heart beat, it would have puzzled him to tell why, and it was not until he had followed the envoy through the corridor to the very threshold of the royal box, that he could ascribe the unwonted flutter in his quickened pulse to its true cause—viz. the joy with which he hailed an introduction to the bright being in whose secret he now felt a double interest.

The grand duchess received the stranger with marked urbanity. She herself presented him to her daughter, and the name of Larun seemed not altogether unfamiliar to the fair creature's ear; who indeed said, with a slight blush, she had surely heard of his services in the French army. Now the baron knew full well, that from Zroniefsky alone could she have had the information; and that it came from no less favoured source he felt further assured, from the privileges of old acquaintanceship, with which he seemed at once invested, and the friendly ease with which he was admitted as a party to the ensuing conversation.

'My daughter has suggested,' said the grand duchess, 'that as a stranger within these walls, and consequently perfectly unbiassed, you might be an impartial arbiter on a point we have been discussing. Can there not, do you think, exist in nature hidden agencies, which—which—(I hardly know how to express it)—when we recklessly and unnecessarily set them in motion, are capable of bringing evil on our heads?'

'Nay, mother!' cried the princess playfully, 'how can the baron be an unbiassed judge, when your very first words so decidedly beg the question? But from your solemn opening he will now guess that the matter in dispute between us is an opera; so I must explain. Now, sir, this opera is, take it all in all, perhaps the most perfect and delightful I know; and having had the good fortune to hear it on a foreign stage, my first wish on returning home was that it might be got up here immediately. But, would you believe it? I can never have my wish gratified. Not that actors are wanting, or the music too difficult—but—really the reason is too childish to tell!'

'May I ask the name of the opera?' said the stranger.

'O yes—it is Othello.'

'Othello! a noble work of art indeed! It is not often that such soul-speaking music finds its way to the heart; and that must be a callous one on which the swanlike dirge of Desdemona fails to leave a deep and lasting impress of melancholy.'

'Do you hear that?' exclaimed the eager girl—'this gentleman comes from Petersburgh, from Warsaw and Berlin—and yet thinks as highly as I do of Othello. He has heard it often—I once only, and am never again to have the satisfaction—and for what?—a nursery tale which no one now would give ear to.'

'Do not talk thus,' said the duchess seriously, 'there are facts connected with this history which make me shudder even to think of them. But we are speaking to our arbiter in enigmas. Suppose, sir, that every time Othello was represented here, a fire took place, and say if it would not seem a coincidence more than ordinary.'

'What a supposition, mother!' interrupted the princess, laughing—'a madder one even than the legend!'

'Fire will suffice for my purpose, and fire it shall be—for the present,' said the mother as solemnly as before. 'Well then—Othello

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was first brought forward, as a drama from Shakspeare, some fifty years ago—a certain event ensued—a conflagration for instance, we have called it, took place. The thing was considered ominous, and for long no attempt to revive the piece was made; but a new and more able translation appeared—it became popular, was acted, and the event was signalized, as before, by a fire. I remember (my daughter does not) when Othello, first travestied as an opera, came out among us, and how we laughed to think the sorrows of the Moor should evaporate in song. But Desdemona did not fall unavenged—the grave yawned for another and other victim. The event—(the fire I mean)—again and closely followed; and since then Othello has been a proscribed piece here. The thing, baron, seems foolish, but it is *true*. Now what say you of it, and how do you decide our controversy?'

'In favour of your royal highness,' replied Larun, in a tone half between jest and earnest; 'and if you will permit me, I can corroborate my verdict by an example from my own knowledge. I had once an old maiden aunt, a disagreeable mysterious sort of person, whom we children had nicknamed aunt Feathers, because she always wore great dangling black plumes in her bonnet. Just as with your Othello—a notion prevailed in our family that whenever aunt Feathers came to see us, some one or other was sure to be sick. The idea, your highnesses may believe, gave rise to abundance of scoffing and laughter, but the illnesses came in spite of them all; and we got so accustomed to the thing, that no sooner were aunt Feathers' black plumes seen nodding in the entry, than old nurse began to make the gruel, and the errand-boy was kept mounted to go for the doctor.'

'A capital figure, your aunt Feathers,' cried the princess, laughing heartily—'how well I can fancy her putting her head out of the carriage-window, and at the very sight of it children scampering as from the plague, and older people looking as wise and solemn as they do here now when any one names Othello!'

'Hush, hush!' once more interrupted the duchess, annoyed, if not angrily. 'People should not talk so lightly of what none can gainsay—at least I know it is thus with my part of the story; and therefore,' added she, relaxing into a smile, 'I fear, baron, that even by your own verdict in my favour, you are condemned to live without Othello till you can see it on other boards.'

'You shall see it here though yet,' whispered Sophia, with something of childish and self-willed energy—'I must have my darling Desdemona's song sung as it should be, on the stage, even should I myself be the devoted victim!'

'Yourself!' exclaimed the stranger, shocked and surprised. 'I thought the ghost of the Moor boded not death, but conflagration.'

'That was my mother's substitute,' replied, in a still lower whisper, the momentarily sobered daughter. 'There is far more both of horror and of danger in the legend!"

The leader of the orchestra gave his well-known signal, the music struck up, and, dismissed with the most gracious of bows, the baron had left the royal box, and was seeking in vain, in the passage, for his guide the envoy, when the warm pressure of a hand made him look up and recognize Count Zroniefsky.

'So my eyes did not deceive me!' cried the count. 'It is my own, my gallant major. How the sight of you revives all the past with me, and blots out the very existence of the last thirteen unlucky years! I feel once more a jolly lancer of the guard.—Vive Poniatowsky—vive L'Emp . . . .'

'In God's name, count, remember where you are,' said his friend. 'And why invoke at so much risk those long-vanished shadows? Let the dead rest, they have had their day.'

'Rest!' rejoined the other, 'that is precisely what I cannot do. O that I were numbered with the dead! How softly, how soundly, would I then sleep, like my brave Poles, whom no voice—not *his*—would now wake up again! Why am I alone of all denied rest?'

As he spoke, the red, unnatural glare of fever was in the once bright eye of the handsome speaker, and his pale and compressed lip told of secret anguish. His friend saw before him, with fanciful interest, no longer the joyous youthful hero he had often beheld at the head of his regiment on a day of victory. The confiding and winning smile, that once was his peculiar charm, had given place to a sterner expression—the eyes that, in manly confidence and all the fearless pride of youth, once freely met the gaze, had assumed a searching distrustful cast; the sickly red which lingered on the cheek seemed but the faded remnant of that youthful bloom which had gained for him, in the salons of Paris, the title of the handsome Pole; and yet, spite of these manifold and painful changes; the work of time and misfortune, enough remained to excuse if not justify the princess's predilection.

'You look hard at me, major,' was his remark, after a short silence, 'as though you would detect in my altered features the friend of other days. You may spare yourself the

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useless trouble—if times change, men will change with them!'

'You are not so greatly changed,' answered the baron, 'but that I recognized you at the first glance. What I miss, and would fain yet find, is the confiding expression of former and better days. Alexander Zroniefsky seems to me to have lost his faith in mankind, and yet,' added he smiling, 'disguise it from others as he may, I am no stranger to the most secret thoughts of his heart.'

'Poor heart!' exclaimed the count with a sigh; 'I sometimes doubt if I have a heart, were it not for its uneasy beating. What thought can you have detected there, save unalterable friendship for yourself, major? If my eye has lost its fire, the warmth lies hid within; the grasp of my hand might have proved to you that I am still the old man.'

'Thanks—but to prove to you also that your heart's riddle is not unread—what has a princely maiden said or done that it should beat uneasily?'

The count grew deadly pale; he pressed the stranger's hand convulsively. 'For God's sake, no more of this. I know—I understand too well what you mean; nay, to you, I may even admit its truth; though to bid you keep my secret as the grave, were to insult an old comrade of the tenth. Did ever one of them betray a friend?'

'None—but what if their comrade should betray himself?'

'Come this way—up this private stair,' whispered the count—'there are people coming. In heaven's name, does any soul on earth except yourself suspect?'

'Make a clean breast, and the confession shall be mutual,' answered the baron.

'Rack me no longer, major, I implore you; I promise to tell you all you wish, if you will but say that you alone have detected me.'

The major could no longer keep his old comrade in suspense, but briefly narrated his late arrival in the town; his having been carried, while his despatches were preparing, by the envoy to the opera; and thus while lost in evident admiration of the youthful princess, a whisper from the envoy's lady had conveyed to him the tidings of her misplaced affections. 'You had but to appear in the ducal box,' added he, 'when one glance satisfied me that you and none else was their too favoured object.'

'But the ambassadress,' inquired the count in a tremulous voice.

'O! she assured me of the fact; and if I mistake not, quoted as her authority a certain high chamberlain's lady.'

The count remained a few moments as it were lost in thought—then conquering his emotion, but eyeing from time to time with shy and sidelong glances his friend of former days, 'Major!' exclaimed he, as with a painful effort, and in a hollow altered tone, 'could you lend me a hundred napoleons?'

The major was taken by surprise. He had been prepared for the effusions so customary and natural in an unfortunate lover, placed by Fate in a position so full of danger and misery to all concerned; but there was something in the demand which accorded so little with the romantic features of the affair, that he could only gaze in astonishment on the count.

'I am a fugitive,' continued he, 'and trusted I had at length found a quiet haven, where I might breathe awhile; but lo! it was my fate to love—ay, and be beloved, major, if ever man was!' Tears were in his eyes, but he mastered his emotion and proceeded in a firmer tone—'It is, in truth, a strange request, which, after so many years' estrangement, I make of you on first meeting; and yet I feel no shame in being thus a beggar. Comrade, remember those lost, never-to-be-forgotten days of northern glory—call to mind the affair of Majaisk.'

'I do!' replied the stranger, his eyes kindling and cheek flushing as he spoke.

'Do you remember how, when the Russian battery in the redoubt opened its murderous fire, and the balls ran whistling along our line, the recreant Piolsky gave orders to sound a retreat?'

'Ay!' interrupted the stranger, in a voice of thunder—'and how you, count, cut him down—how the hussars turned the fortune of the day—how, calling "Forward, lancers of the tenth!" you rushed upon the cannon, and in five minutes they were ours!'

'You remember?' whispered the count much moved—'well! once more my cry is "Forward!" There is a comrade to be saved from worse than death. Forward, brave lancer, to the rescue!'

'He shall be rescued!' cried his friend; and Count Zroniefsky, with a silent but fervent pressure of the arm, through which he passed his own, hurried the stranger from the theatre.

'Well met!' exclaimed the count, as, early the following day, he encountered his friend in the street—'I was just on my way to request a slight favour of you.'

'What I promised you last night, I presume? Come with me to my hotel, where it lies in readiness for you.'

'For heaven's sake, don't mention money!' interrupted the count, 'or anything so dull and prosaic; I am in a mood too flippant, too removed from thoughts of earth, to listen to you. O, my dear friend, I have said to my angel that we are observed, and that I must needs

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fly, as to remain near her and not betray us both, is an impossibility.'

'And may I venture to inquire her answer?'

'O! she is perfectly at ease, she rises superior to such base detractors. "What can they say of us after all?" asked she; "no greater evil than that we have found out each other's merits; and if they think this discovery worth making to others, I must just plead guilty to a bit of folly, and who is there that in the course of a lifetime has not one such at least to answer for?"'

'Sound philosophy,' remarked the baron; 'and not the less so, perhaps, that none more certainly run the risk of betraying themselves than those who are always flattering themselves with blinding every one. But will you pardon one question? It would appear from all this that you and your fair lady meet elsewhere than in an opera-box; for I think it could hardly be discussed between the acts of Don Giovanni.'

'We do meet sometimes,' said the count, lowering his voice to a whisper; 'but how or where shall never of course be known while I remain alive. But harmless as all this is in itself, I know, as well as you do, that it cannot long go on. And it is this which keeps me ever on the alert, ready for a start at a moment's warning; and for this it was, comrade, that I sought your aid, as a poor exile cannot be supposed to be very flush of cash. But we'll talk of this to-morrow; let us make the most of to-day and its joys, and I will not quaff them the less deeply that the draught may be the last.'

'What is it, then, I can help you in to-day?' inquired the baron. 'I think you said you were on your way to seek me.'

'Ah, true, it was for what I must shortly explain. Sophia is aware you are my friend; indeed it is long since I told her all about you—not forgetting the history of the Bridge of the Berezina, where you took me up behind you at the risk of your life. She again spoke to you last night about Othello, did she not? Her mother will not allow it to be acted on account of some nursery tale—I scarce know what.'

'You need not be so diplomatic,' replied his friend, 'I had it from her highness; and from her manner there seemed little hope of her yielding the point.'

'I beg your pardon, I brought her to it at last by a single word. The princess begged and prayed, and you may believe I was nothing loath to come to her assistance. So I put on a serious face, and said I only hoped the reason for the piece being prohibited would not transpire, (as everything did,) at the foreign ambassador's; for one would not like to be shown up all over Europe as clinging to the relics of exploded superstitions. The duchess was forced to agree with me, and consented, though with a very bad grace, that the piece should be acted. But as she left the room, she muttered that the game was not lost yet, for though Othello might be forthcoming, Desdemona might happen to be indisposed.'

'Well done, old soldier,' cried the major, laughing; 'you knew something of a German court when you pitted the fear of the scandalous chronicle against the dread of ghosts and of supernatural agency. I congratulate you on your victory.'

'You may indeed, for Sophia is beside herself with delight at having gained her wish at last. I am at this moment on my way to the manager of the opera, furnished with four hundred arguments (alias dollars) to obviate any pecuniary difficulty, and I want you of all things to go with me.'

'But will it not seem strange to offer such a sum in the princess's name?'

'O, that is obviated already. It is to be given as a subscription from some lovers of music, and pray do you play the enthusiast and the dilettante to keep up the farce. The manager lives not far from hence, and is an honest old scarecrow, whom we shall easily win to our side. Here, round this corner, major; the small house yonder with the bay-window.'

The opera-manager was a little skinny man, who had been in his day a celebrated singer, and now, in his old age, reposed upon his laurels. He received the friends with a sort of courtly and artistical urbanity, strangely at variance with his droll habiliments. On his head he wore a black Florentine night-cap in lieu of the wig which he put on to go abroad; and there was, it must be confessed, some discrepancy between this commodious but homely head-gear, and the tightly-fitting modern frock-coat and smart breeches, which gave token that, though some sixty years had gone over his head, the little manager was still a bit of a dandy. His feet again, however, kept his head in countenance, for he shuffled about across the floor in such wide and well worn free slippers, that his motion rather resembled skating than ordinary walking.

'I am already made acquainted,' said the pompous little functionary, as the count proceeded to unfold his commission—'already apprised of the wish prevailing in high quarters regarding a certain favourite object, and nothing on my part can be wanting to fulfil it, my sole object in life being to enchant the royal ear with all that the divine art of music can possibly afford. I must, however, in all submission, take leave to premise certain considerations by which our joint views may be frustrated.'

'Am I to understand from this that you de-

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cline bringing forward the opera?' said the count impatiently.

'God forbid I should,' was the answer, 'and thus implicate myself in a direct act of murder against the exalted family I serve. No, no, as long as I have anything to say in this management, that ill-omened piece shall never be given on these boards.'

'Could I have supposed,' exclaimed the disappointed emissary, 'that a man like yourself was thus infected with popular delusion! From my earliest childhood I have been accustomed to hear your name quoted with honour as the prince of singers, and I longed to become personally acquainted. I should be sorry such a picture were marred in my mind's eye by the blot of superstition.'

The old man was evidently flattered, by the satisfied smile which crossed his withered features, and he shuffled about the room with his hands in his pockets, muttering, 'You are too good—you do me too much honour: yet once upon a time I was somebody—I was reckoned in my day a tolerable tenor. But though all this is long over, I am not so much in my dotage as to listen to idle tales. Where there are *facts* to go upon, there is no room for superstition.'

'Facts!' exclaimed both friends at once.

'Ay, gentlemen, stubborn facts. You are, neither of you, I believe, of this town or neighbourhood, else you could not have failed to know them.'

'I have heard something of the legend,' said the baron, slightingly; 'if I do not mistake, it bears that Othello is never acted without setting the town on fire.'

'Fire! God forgive me, I had rather it were the signal for a general conflagration; for fire can be put out, and there are such things as engines and insurance offices. But death, gentlemen—we have no insurers against him.'

'Death!' echoed the friends; 'and who is to die!'

'Ah, that is no secret,' said the manager, 'though almost treason to give it utterance. As often as Othello appears on the stage, within eight days after must death carry off a member of the royal family.'

The friends could not help starting up as if shot, from their chairs, there was in the tone in which the old man spoke something so mysterious and prophetic; and yet the next moment they resumed their seats, laughing at their own panic, without, however, in the least impairing by their mirth the solemnity of the little manager.

'You are pleased to be merry, gentlemen,' said he; 'and it is not for me to dispute your pleasure. But perhaps, if not trespassing too much on your time, you would cast your eyes over the Theatrical Register, kept from so far back as a hundred and twenty years, by our late prompter, who lived to the age of Methuselah himself.'

'O by all means let's have the register!' exclaimed the count, still in high good humour, and disposed to treat the whole affair as a joke; and the little functionary soon shuffled with unusual alacrity into an adjoining room, and returned bringing with him a ponderous, dingy, brass-clasped folio volume.

Putting on a pair of huge horn spectacles, he turned over the apparently familiar pages, and saying, 'Attention, gentlemen, if you please, to what I now read on account of its connection,' read thus—'A. D. 1740, Dec. 8th, met her death, Mamemoiselle Charlotte Fandaner, of this theatre, during the representation of the tragedy of Othello, Moor of Venice, from Shakspeare.'

'But,' interrupted the major, 'how could Shakspeare's Othello be acted here in 1740, when, if I do not greatly mistake, Schroder was the first to introduce it, many years later, to the German public?'

'I must beg your pardon there,' said the old man. 'The grand duke in his travels to England had seen, and been so much delighted with, the piece, that he caused it to be translated, and acted on his return. But listen to what is further set down here. "The said Charlotte Fandaner, in the character of Desdemona, miserably perished by actual suffocation, under the bed-clothes, with which in the play her death is supposed to have been effected. May God have mercy on her unhappy soul!" Now gentlemen, this murder—for such it unquestionably was—has always been thus accounted for. Mademoiselle Fandaner, it seems, was extremely handsome, the duke of that day a very dissolute prince, and the knowledge of this induced the poor actress, on whom he placed his notoriously fickle affections, (which had already proved fatal to several earlier mistresses,) to bind by some terribly solemn compact her royal seducer. Faring no better, however, after her brief period of favour than her predecessors, the poor girl threatened to make public throughout Europe the nature of her princely lover's vow, the particulars of which were already deposited in various foreign cities, awaiting only her signal for immediate publication.

'Now the Grand Duke Neporunk was a man as relentless in his hatreds as reckless in his loves. It is said he tried to poison her in various manners, but she baffled him by eating nothing she did not herself prepare. He then bethought him of the facilities afforded him by the play of Othello, had it brought forward, and gave a stranger actor a bribe to

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play his part of a murderer so naturally, that somehow or other poor Charlotte Fandaner never woke more.'

The count shuddered. 'And is this all really true?' asked he of the manager.

'You may inquire of all the old people in the place,' was the answer; 'not one of them will tell the story otherwise. An investigation was begun into the matter, but the grand duke quashed it, took the player into his own service, and gave out that the actress's death was an unfortunate accident. But that day week he lost his only son, a fine little prince of twelve years old.'

'*That* at least was all accident,' said the major.

'You may call it so,' replied the manager, turning over the leaves, 'but listen. Two years elapsed before Othello was again acted, the duke, since the murder, having taken a dislike to it. At the end of that time, however, he was reckless enough to forget all about it—and here occurs the following entry in the register: "On the 28th September, 1742, Othello, Moor of Venice;" and on the margin please observe these remarks: "Wonderful to relate, on 5th October died the princess Augusta, exactly eight days after the representation; just as happened this time two years to the late lamented prince Frederick." Accident, will you still call it, gentlemen?'

'Certainly, nothing more,' reiterated both.

'Let me proceed, then,' said the manager quietly. '6th February, 1748, Othello, Moor of Venice.' Perhaps it may be mere coincidence—but pray be pleased to look, gentlemen, and satisfy yourselves that the same hand made the marginal entry—'Awful to relate—the ghost of Mademoiselle Fandaner yet walks unappeased. Died on the 14th, prince Alexander, *suddenly*, eight days from the date of the above."'

The old man stopped, and scanned his guests with a look of inquiry, which was this time met in silence. He then turned over his volume and read,—'January 16th, 1775—for the benefit of Mademoiselle Koller, Othello, Moor of Venice.' Opposite stands, 'Alas! poor princess Elizabeth, that thou shouldst be taken so early! Obiit 24th January, 1775.'

'Folly! sheer folly!' exclaimed the unconvinced major. 'I grant there are such coincidences, brought about by the mere caprice of fortune; but I must have more rational grounds for belief, before I can connect the death of these dead royalties with the representation of Othello!'

'Sir,' replied the old man very solemnly, 'these it is not in my power to furnish; I can, however, remind you of the words of the great man from whose genius the play in question had its birth—"There are more things between heaven and earth than are dreampt of in your philosophy."'

'I am aware of that,' said the count; 'but I doubt if Shakspeare would ever have uttered the remark, if he had foreseen how much nonsense might shelter behind it.'

'Possibly,' replied the late musico; 'but please to listen a little further. I come now to record a somewhat more "modern instance," within my own recollection, and one which the grand duke himself afforded.'

'What!' interrupted the major, 'the same to whom the actress owed her catastrophe?'

'The same. Othello had not been performed for upwards of twenty years, when foreign royalties (I remember it as if yesterday) came on a visit to the palace. They patronized the theatre; and, reason or none, one of the stranger princesses insisted on the revival of Othello. The grand duke consented very reluctantly; not from any dread of the awful circumstances connected with previous representations, for he was a free-thinker, and believed in nothing of the sort. But he was grown old, and the sins of his youth began to lie heavily on his heart, and he loathed the very thoughts of the unlucky tragedy. Whether, however, the wish to please the foreign lady, or the dread of being laughed at by the public, predominated, he gave way; and the piece, hastily studied and got up, was brought forward. See, gentlemen, here is the entry—"16th October, 1793, Othello—at the Court Theatre, Chateau de H——. By his royal highness's special command."'

'Well, old man, and what ensued? tell us quickly,' exclaimed the friends impatiently.

'That day eight days—24th October, 1793—his royal highness expired.'

'Impossible!' said the major, after a pause. 'Let us see your register; where is this about the grand duke? I see nothing noted in the margin.'

'No, sir,' replied the old man, bringing in a couple of other volumes—'but will you take the trouble to inspect these? the one is a life of the duke, the other, an account of his funeral obsequies?'

The count took in his hand a little thin book, bound in black, and read, 'Description of the solemn lying-in-state on 24th October, 1793, of the lately deceased high and mighty prince—'

'This stuff,' he exclaimed, springing up, 'would go far to make fools of sensible men; and yet 'tis but a chance, all chance, and nothing more. And have you,' added he, after a pause, 'any more such wonderful histories?

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'I could bring forward several,' replied the old man composedly, 'if I were not afraid of wearying you—but one shall suffice, and that as it were of yesterday. Rossini composed his opera of Othello, thereby proving—which some had doubted—his power to touch the deepest chords of tragic emotion in the human breast. In the absence of any command from the court, the piece was never brought out at the theatre; but the royal band got the music and practised it, and so enchanted the public by some pieces performed in the concert-room, that nothing was talked of henceforward but Othello. No one seemed to apprehend, or even dream of, the appalling circumstances connected with the unfortunate tragedy, as having anything to do with the musical version, and, in compliance with the universal wish, the then manager (for I was still a singer and performed Othello) received at length the order to bring out the opera.

'The house was filled to suffocation—the court and nobility were all there—the orchestra exerted itself to the uttermost, and the singers outdid themselves; and yet—I know not why—we all experienced uncomfortable sensations when Desdemona, having sung her famous song, laid her harp aside, and prepared to go to rest, and the cruel Moor stole in to accomplish his murderous purpose. The house, the stage, the scenes, were the same which had witnessed the premature end in the very same character, of a creature full of health and beauty. Even I (notwithstanding the bloody nature of my part) could not help casting an anxious trembling glance towards the ducal box, where sat so many blooming scions of royalty, and inwardly apostrophizing the perturbed spirit of the murdered songstress, and hoping that the sweet sounds with which her wrongs were now for ever associated, might have the effect of soothing and appeasing her. It seemed to be so—five, six days passed, and no tidings of any illness in the royal circle. People began to laugh at a ghost which transformation into an opera could cheat of its revenge; the seventh day came and went, in peace—but, on the eighth, Prince Ferdinand was shot out hunting!

'I heard of that,' said the major hastily; 'it was a mere accident—the going of by chance of his companion's gun.'

'And did I ever say,' rejoined the imperturbable old man, 'that the ghost itself had pulled the trigger? I only spoke of some inexplicable and supernatural connection.'

'The connection, such as it is, has yet to be proved,' said both his hearers—'where is it set down that eight days before that fatal *chasse* Othello had been acted?'

'Here!' said the manager, pointing out the page in the register, and the count himself read—'Othello, an opera by Rossini, 12th March, 18—:' and on the margin, three times underlined, the note—'On the 20th of the same month Prince Ferdinand lost his life out shooting.'

The gentlemen looked at each other a few minutes, and said nothing; they would fain have laughed, but the old man's solemnity and the strange and distressing coincidence of the events narrated by him, had taken stronger hold on them than they chose to acknowledge. The major turned over the register, and tried to whistle—the count seemed in a brown study, and sat leaning his head on his hand. He sprang up at length, however, exclaiming—'Be all this as it may, there is now no help for it; the opera must go on. The court, the foreign ambassadors, are all aware of the intention, and we should become a laughing-stock were it to be abandoned on such grounds. Here, sir, are four hundred dollars, consigned to you by some amateurs of music, to insure a brilliant debût to this favourite opera. Buy with them what you will,' added he, smiling, 'and a whole band of exorcists, and whatever may be needful to lay the ghost in the Red Sea—but Othello we must and will have.'

'Gentlemen,' said the old manager solemnly, 'time was, when in my young days I might have smiled and scoffed at such things, as you do; but age has sobered me, and I have learned that there is more in them than we are willing to admit. I thank you for your liberal gift, and will not misapply it. But it is only, I warn you, by express command from the highest quarter that I will bring out the piece. Good God!' exclaimed he, in a voice of deep emotion, 'if the dark lot should again be cast, and the fair and favourite child, the Princess Sophia, should be the victim!'

'Peace, old man!' cried the count, turning pale, 'your hallucinations are enough to make one moonstruck at noon-day! Adieu! Remember that, *coute qu'il coute*, Othello must be acted. Spare yourself all the theatrical *ruses* of colds and fevers, catarrhs and hoarsenesses, for I swear by Old Nick himself, that if no Desdemona is forthcoming, I'll summon up the ghost of the murdered lady, to resume, for one night only, her abdicated part.'

The little manager crossed himself, and shuffled uneasily up and down the room. 'What a reckless way of talking!' muttered he sadly to himself—'what if she were to take him at his word, like the statue in Don Juan?' then aloud—'Gentlemen, I pray you, no more of this; who knows how near any one may be to his own perdition!'

The friends exchanged a smile on leaving

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the apartment—and yet the musical prophet with the silk skull-cap and fur slippers would not, (laugh at him as they might,) like Desdemona's nurse's song, for long 'go out of their mind.'

SIMILITUDINES.—No. IV.

BY MISS H. B. MACDONALD.

THE ZEPHYR.

It left the bower at early morn,
Where soft it had been sleeping,
With perfumes from each flowery urn,
And dews, that each bright bud adorn,
Around its slumbers creeping.

Yet thence it roamed, a wanton thing!
Seeking afar for gladness;—
O, after such sweet nurturing,
Strange seems the bliss the world can bring
'Midst bowers that bloom in sadness!

And first it wandered far and high,
Behind a sky-lark's soaring;
And revelled in the melody,
Whose waves around were gushingly
In song and rapture pouring.

And next it strayed through the dim retreat
Of a poet's noontide slumbers;
And near him sang, in wailing meet,
Giving the tone of sadness sweet,
That ever haunts his numbers!

And then it sought a gladder place,
Where many a youthful daughter
Her early way 'mid flowers did trace;
And it played with her waving tresses' grace,
And rang through the silvery laughter.

Then a butterfly it danced before,
And kissed its golden pinion,
And bore it grove and meadow o'er,
But the butterfly left in fated hour,
For a darker lot's dominion.

And then it hung above a rose,
Till the rose with noontide perished;
But on its way it lightly goes,
Nor less for the ill-fated close
Of all it once hath cherished.

Unto a sad Eolian lyre,
It came, at eve, with failing
Breath—that throughout each mournful wire,
Doth sadly now its last respire,
Like penitence's wailing.

And what have ye, O pleasure-born?
Who wander too light-hearted,
Your glittering hopes of youth to earn,
But penitence's lot to mourn,
When all hath thus departed?

Sept., 1841.

THE POET AND THE REVIEWER.

A TALE OF THE LITERARY WORLD.

BY MRS. ABDY.

A NEW number of the ——— Review had just appeared; it was a particularly brilliant number; that is, it was more than usually cutting and satirical; subscribers begged for it at the circulating libraries, and members canvassed for it at the book societies; but alas! what was sport to the public was death to the poor unfortunates who groaned under the lash of the unmerciful reviewers. A popular tourist, a fashionable novelist, a man of science, and a young poet, were severally put to the torture in the most approved gradations of mental suffering, beginning with the thumb-screw, and ending with the rack. One only of the poisoned shafts, however, penetrated to the heart of the victim. The tourist had just received five hundred pounds for his copyright, and was so agreeably employed in paying his wine-merchant's account, ordering a grand piano for his wife, and engaging a house for the season at a crowded watering-place, that the arrow flew by him unheeded. The novelist was absolutely pleased with the attack; he was decidedly partial to persecution, and passed two mornings in calling on his friends, and telling them, in strict confidence, that Lord H—, who it was well known had great influence with the ——— Reviewers, had instigated them to abuse his novel on account of the important disclosures which it contained of the flirtations, extravagances, debts, and peccadillos of the said Lord H.'s niece, the celebrated Lady Emily D—! The man of science had recently purchased railroad shares, they had risen in value, and he was undecided whether to part with them at a small profit, or to wait the chance of a larger one: while thus engaged in watching the scale of interest, he felt perfectly indifferent as to the evolutions of the balance of criticism. But the young poet—there the arrow told with fatal force; the poem was his first publication—he had, for months before its appearance, been building airy castles of fame and enjoyment, imagining himself be-

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loved by the beautiful, sought by the studious, petted by publishers, courted by countesses, and now—the sad reverse!—he lay on a sofa, having ordered his servant to deny him to all visitors under the just plea of indisposition; the fatal review was beside him, and a faithful friend sat opposite to him.

'Now, really, Orford,' said Tresham for the twentieth time, 'you should not make yourself so unhappy about nothing.'

'Nothing!' repeated the sufferer, in a reproachful tone; 'O Tresham, you do not understand the feelings of an author.'

'Pardon me, I can very well understand the feelings of a penniless author, whose abilities for rhyming constitute the stock in trade by the successful sale of which he is to soften his rigid landlady, and silence his dunning laundress; but you are rich, Orford, you need not covet gold.'

'Only the golden violet,' replied his friend with a faint smile; 'and that I am never likely to attain; this review is the most important of its class; it will stamp degradation and ridicule on me at the outset of my career; a review broke the heart of Kirke White; a review shortened the days of Keats—it will have the same effect on me. Were it written without talent or cleverness, I think I could bear it, but the wit of the writer equals his ill-nature.'

'Quite so,' replied Tresham, laughing; 'how excessively amusing the passage is in which he compares you to——'

'You need not proceed,' said Orford, with some pique—'every word of the article is deeply engraven on my mind; and if it affords so much diversion to my friend, how can I expect that it will fail to delight and gratify those who are indifferent to me?'

'But why should anybody know you are the sufferer?' asked Tresham; 'you published under the name of Sidney Greville.'

'True,' replied Orford, 'but everybody in my native county knows me by that name, since it was my signature during three years in which I was a contributor to the ——shire Journal. I there attained some fame, and probably excited some envy—there will be many who will exult in my defeat, and make it public in their own circle.'

'Come, Orford, shake off these gloomy thoughts, and take a turn up St. James's-street with me.'

'Not for the world. Everybody I meet will be full of the review.'

'Poor Orford! you verify the saying, "He that is giddy thinks the world turns round." Because all your ideas are occupied by this annoying review, you imagine that the whole money-making, pleasure-loving population of the "Great Metropolis" have their thoughts, hopes, and feelings stitched up in a stiff paper cover!'

'Jest is no argument, Tresham,—I cannot face any of my acquaintance.'

'Then go and travel for a few months.'

'That expedient will not answer. In these days of locomotion we are sure to encounter some of our acquaintance "taking tea and toast upon the wall of China." The English like to inflict their dulness on one of their countrymen, and I shall be insulted with perpetual condolences on the extreme barbarity of the —— reviewers.'

'I will tell you,' said Tresham, after a short pause, 'what will be the best course that you can pursue—take a journey with me. I have long promised to go and see my cousin, Lady Walwyn. She has been two years a widow, and lives in such retirement, that you need not shrink from the idea of encountering any of your acquaintance at her house. She has an elderly maiden aunt, Miss Cobham, living with her—a worthy, good-natured creature, who plays propriety admirably—therefore I shall not outrage decorum by taking a young man to visit her. I am sure that she will exactly suit you. She is a literary lady, and has sent some very pretty contributions to the magazines and annuals.'

'The very reverse of what I could wish,' ejaculated poor Orford. 'If she is a literary lady, how she will despise one who has been so severely handled by the —— Review!'

'In all probability she has not yet seen the —— Review,' said Tresham. 'Ladies in the country are usually dependent on book societies for their periodicals; and it has always been a matter of deep mystery to me who gets the new works at book-societies, for I never yet met with a member who did not complain bitterly of the lack of them; besides, should she even have read the review, it only criticizes the poem of Sidney Greville, and how in the world is she to identify you with that name? Cumberland is very widely distant from your native county, and you may depend upon it that all your triumphs in the ——shire Journal are quite unknown to Lady Walwyn.'

Much more was said on the subject by the good-natured Tresham, who really felt anxious to introduce his friend to his cousin, not only with a regard to the present gratification of both parties, but to their permanent attachment.

Lady Walwyn had sacrificed herself, through motives of filial duty, to a man many years her senior; he had died within a year after their union, and now, although beautiful, clever, and well connected, she persisted in living in retirement, seeking in literature her

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only solace and enjoyment, when Tresham deemed that she ought to be breaking hearts at Almack's, and appearing among the engravings of the Book of Beauty, instead of quietly confining herself to its printed leaves. Three days after this conversation took place, Tresham and his friend were safely domesticated under the roof of Lady Walwyn, and Orford appeared quite as happy in her society as Tresham could have hoped, although he did not feel quite at his ease, until he had interrogated her whether her bookseller had sent her down the periodicals of the month, and received her assurance that she had read a few of the magazines, but had not seen one of the reviews.

A month passed, a tranquil, happy month; Orford so far got the better of the wound inflicted by the reviewer, that he did not mention the subject above five times a day to Tresham; he addressed sonnets to Lady Walwyn, he prevailed on her to indulge him with the inspection of her manuscripts, and he by turns wrote poetry to her music, and composed melodies to her poetry. Orford was minus a heart by his visit to Cumberland, but it was pretty evident that he had gained one in exchange. Tresham meanwhile was exemplary in his attentions to the maiden aunt, constantly walking by her side, and contriving to keep her at least fifty yards before or behind the 'happy pair,' who were evidently in the way of being all and all to each other.

Miss Cobham was never weary of descanting on Tresham's politeness and courtesy, and declared that he was a model for all the young men of the age. Honey, however, will cloy, and Tresham began to grow quite weary of the sameness of his life, and to wish to return to London.

'My dear Orford,' he said one day, 'why delay your proposal to Clarissa? it is evident you are attached to her, and that she returns your affection; lay poetry aside, I beseech you, and speak to the purpose in plain prose.'

'O, Tresham!' exclaimed Orford, 'can you believe that I have forgotten that fatal review?—do you think that I could propose to Clarissa without confessing to her that I am an abject wretch, held up to the scorn of the public without means of redress or defence? she will despise me, she will cast me off, the instant the confession is made to her.'

'She will do no such thing;' said Tresham, 'my cousin, albeit a poetess, has an excellent solid understanding; she knows the world of literature better, perhaps, than any other part of the world, and she is quite aware that reviewers are not quite prophets, and that they have often exalted the blockhead, and frowned upon the man of genius.'

'Perhaps, then,' said Orford nervously, 'you will have the kindness to break it to her.'

Tresham repeated, 'Break it to her!' in a rallying tone, but he deemed the suggestion worth acting upon, and requested a private interview with Lady Walwyn, with an extremely grave face, considering that by raising her fears, and inducing her to suppose that some very serious obstacle existed to her union with Orford, she would be relieved by the disclosure of the truth, and glad to compound for no worse a misfortune than the 'cutting and maiming' of her poet-love at the hands of the ——— reviewers.

Tresham, in consequence, after sounding the praise of Orford's person, talents, temper, landed property, and money in the funds, spoke of his affection for Lady Walwyn, his hopes that it was not displeasing to her, his anxiety to propose to her, and the sad, solitary reason which impeded him from so doing.

'I know it,' said Lady Walwyn, 'I know it but too well; I have seen that some unexplained sorrow weighs heavily on the heart of Orford even in his gayest moments. I surmise the cause, alas! some prior attachment exists, some engagement to one probably far more deserving than myself, through which he wishes yet dreads to break.'

'No, no, Clarissa,' said Tresham, 'Orford's heart and hand were free as air a month ago; it is not one of your delightful sex whom he regards as an enemy to his happiness.'

'O, then!' exclaimed Lady Walwyn, with increased trepidation, 'he is engaged in a dispute, probably intending to terminate it by hostile means; and yet how can Orford, with his principles and strict conscientiousness, bear to think of appearing in the character of a duellist?'

'Again you are wrong, my dear cousin; Orford's foe is not easily to be discovered; he is an invisible personage, a being "without a local habitation," a shadow who launches his darts from a paper castle; but do not imagine that I am initiating you into the mysteries of a German romance. Orford, you know, is, like yourself, literary; but he has not, like you, had the prudence to confine himself to the "primrose path" of magazines and annuals; he has encountered what Lady Hesketh calls "the fierce eye of the public," and his effusions, while yet damp from the press, have been seized upon by a hard-hearted reviewer, who has victimized the poor author without mercy; the shock was severe to his sensitive mind; he left London to avoid his friends, and flying from friendship, fell into love; his feelings now are something like those of a knight unhorsed at the tournament in sight of his lady fair,

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and he will never muster up courage to offer himself and his worldly goods to you, unless you bid him "live for your sake," or, in plainer language, try to convince him that he has been making "much ado about nothing!"'

'I am truly glad that the matter is no worse,' said Lady Walwyn, with a bright smile, 'yet I can quite enter into the feelings of poor Orford; however, in his presence I shall make very light of the affair, and assure him of what indeed is an acknowledged fact, that the Quarterly often dries the tears which the Edinburgh has caused to flow, and that the Critical heals the wounds inflicted by the Monthly. I conclude, of course, that it is to some inferior publication that Orford is indebted for this attack; for although I have not seen the reviews for some time, I have read their table of contents in the newspapers, and am certain that Orford's poem did not form a part of them.'

'You are mistaken,' said Tresham; 'Orford has been attacked by one of the first of the periodicals, the ——— Review, but he did not write under his own name; he employed the signature which he had affixed to his early fugitive writings, Sidney Greville.'

Lady Walwyn turned pale, her lip quivered, she burst into tears, and, pleading indisposition, quitted the room.

'Now what anomalies women are,' soliloquised Tresham, 'especially women who write for the periodicals! Here is my cousin, attached to an amiable and excellent young man of congenial tastes, habits, and pursuits to her own, and fortune and connexions to match, and yet her predilection for him is evidently weakened, because some writer, whom she does not know, has decried and ridiculed him in a review, which she *does* know. How much is there in the "magic of a name!" Had I told her that Orford had been shown up in the Diurnal Inquisitor, or the Hebdomadal Intelligencer, she would have cared nothing about it. I thought my cousin was a superior woman, free from prejudice and weakness, but I shall come to the same opinion of the fair sex held by honest John Moody, that "the best—when she's mended—won't have much goodness to spare!"'

Tresham, however, did not make Orford a party to his unfavourable opinion of 'heaven's last best work,' but merely told him in general terms, that he had informed Lady Walwyn of the matter in question, and that she had remarked that the praise of one reviewer frequently followed close upon the dispraise of another. Lady Walwyn appeared at dinner, and Tresham hoped that she would have recovered her spirits; but her eyes were red, her manner embarrassed, and her constraint quickly communicated itself to her unfortunate lover.

Tresham saw that matters must not be permitted to proceed at this rate, and the moment the servants had quitted the room, he boldly began on the subject of the review, and called on Lady Walwyn to assist him in rallying Orford on his sensitiveness. She faintly and pensively echoed his remarks. Tresham had been more than once reproved by Orford for suffering merriment to overpower him when alluding to some clever sarcasm of the reviewer. He considered the present a fine opportunity of atoning for the offences of the past, and consequently began a most animated attack, not only on the sentiments, but the style of the article in question.

'You would be perfectly indignant, Clarissa,' he said, 'were you to read it; the stupidity of it can only be equalled by the malignity. The writer appears to possess equal ignorance of grammar and of gentlemanly feeling; he is evidently some low, contemptible fellow, the meanness of whose mind and manners infuses itself into every line of his detestable scrawl.'

Tresham would have added much more in the same strain, for, like a counsel, he was beginning to wax warm with the wrongs of his client, but Miss Cobham prevented him by exclaiming, 'Clarissa, my love, I am sure you are very ill.' The truth of the observation was proved just as it was uttered—Lady Walwyn had fainted!

Lady Walwyn did not appear again that evening, and did not leave her room the next morning. Miss Cobham sent to request an interview with Tresham.

'Dear Clarissa had no sleep last night,' she said, 'and yet will not allow me to send for medical advice. It is no common illness—her mind is seriously affected.'

'Yes,' replied Tresham, 'she evidently keenly feels the indignity offered to her lover by these dons of literature, who I fervently wish were sent out to edit the New Zealand Gazette.'

'That is not the whole of the matter,' rejoined Miss Cobham, 'Clarissa is not merely unhappy about the things that have happened, but about those that have not happened.'

Tresham opened his eyes, and waited eagerly for an explanation of this oracular declaration.

'It is my opinion,' solemnly observed Miss Cobham, 'that my dear niece is affected with monomania.'

'Monomania indeed!' repeated Tresham, looking rather contemptuously on the good lady, of whose knowledge of human complaints he did not entertain a very favourable opinion, seeing that she was proprietress of a

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medicine-chest which was a perfect Pandora's box to the poor in the neighbourhood, and from which she showered Morrison's pills like hail-stones, and dispensed syrop of poppies in such liberal doses, that the sleep produced by them was one from which it was very difficult to awaken the patient.

'Yes,' repeated Miss Cobham, 'it is a decided case of monomania. I have been speaking to Clarissa about Mr. Orford, and trying to convince her that the trouble of which he and she think so much is one of very little consequence compared with the real trials of life. The poor Batemans down in the village have a bed-ridden father and a blind mother quite dependent on them, seven children in the hooping-cough, and the landlord calling every day for his rent.'

'Very sad, very deplorable indeed,' interrupted Tresham; 'but I heard you relate the whole story yesterday, and gave you a sovereign for them — pray return to Lady Walwyn.'

'She told me,' replied Miss Cobham, 'that she could never unite herself to Orford, never even endure to see him again; that she had clouded his prospects and destroyed his hopes, and that she had been a treacherous assailant and a secret foe to him. Now poor Clarissa would not be the enemy of a sparrow, and Mr. Orford was a perfect stranger to her when he arrived in Cumberland, and since then, I am sure, all her actions to him have been those of kindness and good-will.'

'Very true,' said Tresham, musing—'it is an extraordinary and inexplicable business.'

'Not unprecedented, however,' replied Miss Cobham; 'cases of monomania are sadly on the increase.'

And hereupon she showed a great inclination to enter into the particular cases of two of her intimate friends, one of whom was a gentleman, who held the firm belief that he was a tea-kettle, and the other a lady, who entertained a decided conviction that she was an air balloon, and who were both of them so remarkably clever in other respects, and so rational on all general subjects, that the gentleman had been solicited to lecture on metaphysics, and the lady was preparing for the press a treatise on political economy.

'I shall be delighted,' said Tresham, 'to hear all these interesting particulars to-morrow; and were I in your place, I should certainly forward an account of them to the editor of the Lancet; but at present I can think of nothing but Clarissa; all her illness, mental and bodily, seems to hinge upon this annoying review.'

'Yes,' replied Miss Cobham, 'I would not have her see it for the world. I hope, if you have the number with you, that you will burn it; I cannot bear the thought that she might accidentally get hold of it. O, what would the feelings of that atrocious reviewer be, if he knew the evil he had done! but perhaps his conscience is in a completely seared state.'

Miss Cobham was about to draw a vivid picture of the appalling state of mind of an impenitent reviewer, when Tresham interrupted her.

'I do not agree with your view of the case,' he said; 'I would have every apprehensive person know the worst at once; if misfortune were always looked full in the face, it would lose much of its repulsive aspect. Perhaps Lady Walwyn surmises that this review contains some aspersions on the moral character of Orford, and she will be relieved when she finds that it only attacks his poetical talents. I will send it up immediately to her dressing-room.'

Miss Cobham vehemently opposed this measure, but Tresham was resolute; he wrote a few lines to his cousin, explaining his reason for wishing her to read the Review, sent it up by the hands of her own maid, and then repaired to Orford, whom he vainly endeavoured to console under his distressing conviction that his disgrace was breaking the heart of the woman whom he loved, and who returned his affection.

Miss Cobham listened at the dressing-room door, fearing that Lady Walwyn would go into hysterics at the end of the first page; hearing no sound, she imagined that she had fainted, and peeped through the keyhole to ascertain the fact; but Lady Walwyn sat very quietly and calmly reading the review, and Miss Cobham was compelled to admit that Tresham had, to all appearance, proved himself able to 'medicine to a mind diseased.' Lady Walwyn appeared at dinner quite her former self, cheerful, tranquil, and self-possessed; when the dessert was placed on the table she alluded to the review, assured Orford that it was quite unworthy the anxiety and trouble that it had caused to himself and his friends, reminded him that reviewers of no common fame had declared Lord Byron to be no poet, and had afterwards honourably and readily recanted their opinion; in short, she spoke on the subject as a woman of a firm mind and an affectionate temper would speak, and Orford cheered up under the influence of this unexpected sunshine. When the party walked out that evening, Tresham persuaded Miss Cobham, before they had reached the end of the first lane, that the air was damp, and likely to give her cold, and as he offered to turn back to the house with her, and requested that she would favour him with a minute account of her talented monomaniacal friends, she was perfectly ready to comply with his recom-

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mendation. Orford and Lady Walwyn returned to the house an engaged couple, the next week they repaired to London, and the next month they were married.

Two years elapsed; the married pair were perfectly happy; the lady continued to write, the gentleman did the same, and he had been lauded and encouraged in so many periodicals, that he had quite forgiven, and almost forgotten, the atrocities of the —— Review. One morning he came into the room with a new publication in his hand. 'Clarissa,' he said, 'the editor of a recently established magazine has requested me to give him a little assistance in the reviewing department; he wishes me to write for him a spirited playful critique of Lord Cornelius Cleverley's nineteenth novel. I have no talent for lively writing, you will do it capitally; do take the task off my hands.'

'Never,' said Clarissa, pushing the volumes from her with as much horror as if she expected them to explode. 'O, Orford, you cannot have an idea of the pain I feel at the very name of a review.'

'But why, my dear Clarissa? I have long recovered the electrical shock given to me by a reviewer in the commencement of my poetical career, and the dons of criticism have certainly since that time made the *amende honorable* to me; why, then, should you continue to feel such horror of them?'

'I will tell you,' said Clarissa, 'and the confession will afford a clue to a part of my conduct previous to our marriage, that must always have struck you as very mysterious. A short time before you were introduced to me, I received a letter and a parcel from a literary gentleman of my acquaintance; he was one of the ——— reviewers; the sudden illness of a near relative incapacitated him from writing a review of a new poem; he enclosed the work to me, and requested that I would favour him with a criticism on it, bearing in mind that the criticism was to be as poignant and severe as I could contrive to make it: the volume bore on its title-page the name of Sidney Greville! I was flattered by this request from a man of talent and celebrity. I read the poem submitted to me, not with a disposition to admire and appreciate it, but with a view to cavil at and ridicule it. I produced a criticism, sent it to the reviewer, and did not entertain the slightest idea that I should ever encounter the author, whom I had treated with such injustice. Imagine my feelings when I discovered that the man so warmly admired and so truly loved by me was Sidney Greville; and that he was dispirited and unhappy from the wound inflicted by my wanton and cruel hand. I had fully determined never again to see you, when Tresham sent up to me the review that had been the source of so much misery to us both, and I turned to the hateful article, dreading from the account that Tresham had given of its virulence and asperity, that it was even worse than my recollection had depicted it to me. O what was my delight when I found that not a line of it was written by myself; that my criticism had evidently been thrown by as wanting severity and spirit, and that of a practised writer substituted in its place! My mind was relieved at once from the trouble that pressed upon it, I was guiltless of the attack that had so wounded your feelings, and I could now sympathize with you and console you, without feeling myself to be a culprit and a hypocrite. The next day I received my criticism in an enclosure from the reviewer, complimenting me on the talent it displayed, but saying that it was too essentially lady-like and refined to suit the pages of the ——— Review, and that he had applied to an experienced friend, who had written one for him better adapted to the general tone of the publication. I immediately committed it to the flames, feeling truly grateful that the public eye had never rested on it, and I resolved that no temptation should ever induce me to write another article of the kind.'

'Dearest Clarissa,' said Orford, 'how you astonish and affect me; but you might have written fifty criticisms without any hazard of meeting the object of one of them, and becoming attached to him.'

'Precisely so,' answered Clarissa: 'and the charmed bullets of the "Fatal Marksman" performed their destined duty to his full satisfaction many times, till at length they penetrated the heart of his best and dearest; we may not indeed happen to wound our beloved, but we may wound the beloved of another, and should shrink from inflicting the torments that we are unwilling to endure.'

'Would you then banish reviewers from the world of letters, Clarissa?'

'Nay, I do not say that; I believe reviewers to be as necessary in the field of literature as commanding officers in the field of battle; I only require that woman, gentle, tender-hearted woman, should feel that she is out of her place in such a scene of turbulence and conflict, and that she could not appear more unlovely and unattractive wielding the javelin of the Amazon, than she does when launching the pointed shafts of the reviewer!'

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THE WHITE POPPY.

BY MRS. ABDY.

Thou hast no power to charm our eye,
Or aid us in our need,
Disdainfully we pass thee by,
Thou pale and worthless weed!
Bright flowers are near thy dwelling-place,
And corn is waving round,
Thou dost but sadden and deface
This gay and fertile ground.

Yet hold—my censure I repress—
Thy wondrous juice contains
A spell to soothe in drowsiness
The weary sufferer's pains;
He sighs for sleep—in thought he shrinks
From night's long train of woes,
Till of thy lulling draught he drinks,
And sinks to soft repose.

What were to him the fragrant flowers
That lavish nature yields,
What the rich vineyard's purple stores,
The harvest of the fields?
Scarce fruits improved by careful art,
Fair buds of varied dyes,
How would they mock his throbbing heart,
How cheat his aching eyes!

Let me no more with erring sense
God's mystic work arraign,
The mighty hand of Providence
Hath nothing made in vain;
Nor need I quit this lonely mead
His gracious love to scan,
Since even in a simple weed
I trace his care for man.

SPENCER MIDDLETON; OR, THE SQUIRE OF RIVER HILL.

BY GEORGE STANLEY, ESQ.

CHAPTER XII.

In which a slight progress is made through the medium of a conversation *de omnibus rebus et quibusdam aliis.*

'PHILLIPS's bill, my dear,' said Mrs. Hamilton, as she presented to the eyes of her husband a full-length document of some forty items, about three weeks after our hero's cold bath.

'Very well, my dear,' replied Gerard's father, casting his eyes on the sum-total—'thirty-two pound ten, is it not, my dear? Add it to the heap, and let me know how much you will want.'

'Dear, dear, Mr. Hamilton, how careless you are about pecuniary matters!' exclaimed the methodical old lady, with upturned eyes and uplifted hands. 'What! without looking at the items?' And then running over the bill—'Letters—seventeen shillings and sixpence—how many letters have you had, my dear?'

'I am sure I do not know, and what is more I don't care, Maggie.'

'Dear, dear, then it is impossible to check that item.'

'Decidedly so, Maggie,' replied the imperturbable husband, not taking his eyes off the last evening's Standard.

'Come, here is the lodging—twenty-seven pounds three shillings—is that right, Mr. Hamilton?'

'Most probably, dear.'

'Most probably! I'm astonished at your carelessness, Mr. Hamilton. How do you expect to being up our children with proper notions of economy, unless you set them a good example? Most probably! I'm astonished, Mr. Hamilton.'

'And so am I, my dear,' replied the husband, with a sarcastic smile.

'Margaret, dear,' continued the old lady to her daughter, who sat stooping over a worsted working frame, on which appeared a tall, ungainly brigand, with such features as can only be perpetrated on canvass by the means of square stitches—'Margaret dear, just follow me in checking this sum, dear.'

The young lady deserted the brigand, and prepared to act secretary to her mother.

'Now, dear—five weeks and three days, at five pound a week. Follow me. Five times twenty, one hundred—seven into ten, once and three over—seven into thirty, four and two over—put down, dear, fourteen shillings.'

Margaret made one step in the sum.

'Then, dear,' continued the old lady, 'twice twelve, twenty-four—seven into twenty-four goes three and three over—put down threepence—fourteen and threepence.'

Margaret advanced another step towards perfection.

'Then, dear, three fours are twelve—seven into twelve, once and five over—that makes fourteen shillings and threepence farthing—and then, five times ten—.'

'Excuse me, my dear Maggie,' interrupted Mr. Hamilton, 'decimals always make me unwell. Farthings, dear, are quite low enough, quite economical enough for me.'

'O, as you please, my dear—just what I thought; they have calculated it at fourteen

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and fourpence a day, instead of fourteen three and a farthing.'

'And seven-tenths, my dear,' suggested Mr. Hamilton.

'Which makes a difference, my dear, of—'

'Somewhere about twopence farthing and two-tenths,' continued the tiresome *cara sposa.*

'That is always your way, Mr. Hamilton,' replied the much-insulted lady, with a due assumption of dignity. 'The proverb says—see Poor Richard, page thirteen—take care of the pence, and the pounds will take care of themselves.'

'But nothing, my dear, about the farthings or the decimals.'

'How can you be so tiresome, Mr. Hamilton?—it is quite provoking.'

'Besides, my dear,' continued the old gentleman, 'the same Poor Richard says elsewhere, "Save at the spigot, and lose at the bunghole." But come, my dear, I suppose that will cover all—there's a check for a hundred, and I don't think we could have spent more than that even on classic ground.' The old lady took the money, with a proper and dignified air of commingled obedience to her lord and master, and pity for his utter carelessness of the minutiæ of bills.

'By-the-bye, Margaret, shall we not have a visit from the boys to-day—our last day but one? Upon my word, I almost regret that Spencer has got well enough to leave us; if it were not for his sufferings, I could wish him back in your infirmary, Margaret.'

'O surely not, papa,' replied Margaret, as with a crooked stitch she made the quadrangular pupil of her brigand's left eye squint most horribly.

'I don't see that, Margaret,' observed her mother, looking up from her dear accounts. 'Two quarts of chicken broth, untasted; a large jug of lemonade, never touched; half a dozen most lively leeches, put on only once; and such a delightful blister, never used at all.'

'Perhaps, my dear,' suggested her husband, with a most grave countenance—'perhaps you would feel obliged to one of us if we would fall ill, and consume the relics of the hospital stock?'

'How can you suppose any such thing, Mr. Hamilton?—though, really, if you could be ill now, instead of waiting till you return to Hethersett, it would be far from inconvenient.'

'Shall I send for Dr. Keats, dear, and have a fit of the gout made to order?'

'Really, Mr. Hamilton, you do say most extraordinary things. What good would a fit of the gout be?—except, indeed, for the lemonade and the leeches, perhaps—as for Dr. Keats, I cannot bear him.'

'What for, my dear?' inquired her tormentor.

'He is so narrow-minded, has no opinion of brown-paper plasters, broom tea, or decoction of marygold flowers, and actually sneers at Doctor Dosemwell's last preparation of aqua pumpaginis antimoritura.'

'That is, he prefers being sent out of the world legally, to being dosed out of it by balsam of fire-brass, or any other quack poison.'

'But do but consider, Mr. Hamilton, the numbers of miraculous cures that have been effected by Dosemwell's preparation.'

'And which,' replied the old gentleman, reading a portion of the doctor's advertisement from his favourite paper, "which may be seen or heard of personally or by letter, postpaid, every day, at the office, 25, Barbican, where the mixture is still continued to be dispensed in bottles of half a crown, seven and-sixpence, and one guinea each, including the government stamp, with a liberal allowance to families or shopkeepers taking three gallons and upwards."'

'Perhaps, my dear'—Mrs. Hamilton tried to say, becoming excited with her husband's attack on her pet nostrum.

"*Nota bene*," continued the imperturbable spouse, without heeding the attempted interruption—"*Nota bene*—None genuine which have not the name of the inventor engraved twenty-five thousand three hundred and twenty-seven times and a half on the government stamp.' And now, my dear, what were you going to say?'

'Perhaps, my dear,' said his wife, with a colour rather too heightened to be comfortable to the possessor of it—'perhaps—no doubt—you will not believe that Humphrey Digges, after being under the hands of Doctor Bolus for fourteen weeks for chronic rheumatism, and taking every medicine that the most eminent among the faculty could prescribe, was completely recovered after taking only two five shilling bottles of Dosemwell's preparation, which his wife said had done him a world of good.'

'Far from it, my dear. I have not the remotest doubt but that Mr. Humphrey Digges recovered after taking these two bottles of miracle-water, or that his wife said they had done him a world of good; but still there is no reason why I should, on that account, run headlong into the fallacy of *post hoc ergo propter hoc*, as the logicians say, or, to reduce it to English, to believe that, because he recovered after taking the water, *ergo* on account of it.'

'And why not, Mr. Hamilton?' asked the medicineress.

'Because it seems much more probable to

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such a sceptic as I am, that the various remedies which he had taken during the fourteen weeks previous to the application of miracle-water, were not prevented from taking their proper effect through the harmlessness of the doctor's wonderful preparation.'

'Well, my dear, it is no use trying to persuade you. The whole of the bills amount to ninety-eight five and threepence halfpenny, so I have to give you—'

'Nothing, my dear—keep the rest for the next occasion;—but, to return to whence we went off after Dr. Keats, the chicken-broth, and Dosemwell's water, I am very glad to hear you agree with me in wishing young Middleton back again with us.'

'Back again with us, Mr. Hamilton!—How can you stoop so over that frame, Margaret? it makes you so red in the face! Just run up into my room, and run over this list of the last week's washing, and see if everything is correct; I will come up to you directly.'

Margaret took the long paper, and with a half-suppressed sigh, and look at her father full of expression, left the room.

'Back again with us!' reiterated Mrs. Hamilton, as she closed the door after Margaret—'how can you think so?'

'Why, my dear, I intend inviting him to Hethersett for a month this long vacation; it will do his health good, and enable him to keep up his reading with Gerard, who, Davis tells me, has constituted himself his free gratis private tutor.'

'Of course, my dear, you may ask any one you think fit to Hethersett, but really you cannot know what sort of person young Mr. Middleton is.'

'All I know,' replied the old gentleman, 'is, that he is of a much better family than ours, fallen into misfortune through the villany of his relations; that, at the risk of his own life, he saved dear Margaret from a watery grave; that he is the most valued friend of our Gerard, whose opinion goes very far with me; and that, during his late residence with us, his patient endurance of his afflictions, his gentle demeanour, his heartfelt thankfulness, and his pious resignation in the hour of his expected death, and the whole of his sufferings, have made me regard him as a second son.'

'And your daughter to regard him as her future husband,' interposed Margaret's mother. 'Is it not so, Mr. Hamilton?'

'It seems likely, my dear—very likely,' was the calm reply.

'And with this staring you in the face, you propose locating him in the same house with her for a month?' asked his wife.

'Precisely so, my dear. I would rather have Spencer Middleton for a son-in-law than any young man who has at present come under my eye.'

'Spencer Middleton your son-in-law!—a poor ruined man!—a concealed Papist! You astonish me, Mr. Hamilton!' exclaimed Margaret's mother. 'Would you throw away your daughter on a beggar?'

'Rather than sell her to the highest bidder. Were it, as is too often the case, the fact, that Margaret was as poverty-stricken as her young preserver, or had but the poor portion of one of many daughters to look for, I would then join with you in throwing every reasonable impediment in the way of forming an attachment for one to whom she could not expect to be united until years had crept over them both.'

Mrs. Hamilton nodded her approbation.

'I would do so, my dear, as a charitable act towards the young people, not as an act of matrimonial worldly policy;—I would do it to prevent the heart-sickness which followeth on hope deferred.'

Mrs. Hamilton signalled her disapprobation.

'Should it appear to me, in such a case, that my interference was too late to prevent the ill-fated attachment, then would it be my duty, and I hope my pride and pleasure, to strive my utmost to accelerate the completion of their hopes, and to debar myself from many of my daily luxuries, to enable them to attain to that happiness which the marriage state *can* afford.'

Mrs. Hamilton still held her peace.

'But when, my dear, on the one side are good birth, noble feelings, a bold heart which feareth no danger, abilities such as may command for themselves respect if foiled of reward, and poverty which bringeth no disgrace on the wearer; on the other side, my guileless, tender-hearted child, owing her life to the poverty-stricken lover, raised not only above all fear of want or distress, but to affluence, through the kindness of her dear god-mother—so far from casting an impediment in the way, I glory in lending my assistance to furthering the pleasant progress of love.'

'But, my dear, consider the extraordinary nature of his opinions on religious subjects—his concealed papistry," interposed Mrs. Hamilton.

'I am at a loss to understand you, my dear.'

'On the first morning after his convalescence, he desired Margaret to read him the Morning Service, and refused to use any other prayers but those in the Prayer Book, though I offered him the "Holy and Pious Meditations of the Reverend Jabeziah Muddlepate."'

'The Socinian interpreter at Lower Hethersett,' interrupted Mr. Hamilton.

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'And "Ephraim Goodenough's Satan's Bill dismissed in Hell's Chancery, with costs,"' continued his lady wife.

'The said Ephraim being---if I remember rightly---an independent expounder in Moorfields.'

'And preferred Laud and Andrews to Wesley and Whitfield, and has actually a cross—'

'Stay, stay, my dear, you are going too fast; let us not now re-open old discussions--suffice it to say, he is no more a papist than your own husband, your own children; in charges of moment judge not from one or two points, and believe only on undeniable evidence. And should facts even then seem to bear you out in your suspicions, say to thyself, Who set me to be a judge over others? and bear in mind, that though there abideth faith, hope, and charity, the greatest of these is charity.'

The conversation was here interrupted by the return of her whose probable lot had been its main topic, with the satisfactory intelligence of the due and correct delivery of the various items of the washer-woman's all-important account. Close on her steps came the other subject of the discussion, our hero, the lately half-drowned Spencer, accompanied by his two friends, Gerard Hamilton and Tom Davis.

The short time that had elapsed since his nigh fatal leap, (though science and experience, combined with unremitting attention and tender care, had striven hard to efface the marks of the disease,) had not sufficed, even for the naturally strong constitution of Spencer Middleton, to shake off the languor of sickness. His once high spirits were almost broken beneath his multiplied cares and sufferings, his tall manly form seemed but an attenuated skeleton, whilst the absence of its wonted brilliancy from his full blue eyes too clearly showed

'The barbed arrow that rankled in his heart.'

The consequences of the irruption of the three friends were six well-defined hearty shakes of the hand, one cold chilling touching of digits, and two kisses. The first six greetings were divisible between three to Davis, two to Spencer, one to Gerard. With the formal touching of the palms the old lady condescended to greet her daughter's 'life preserver,' as Tom had christened our hero. Between Gerard, his mother, and his sister, the two affectionate kisses were shared. And there can be little doubt that had the actual inflicter of the salutations been too fatigued to have performed his osculatory duty to the fair Margaret, he might have easily obtained a proxy for the due performance of the act from either of his inseparable friends.

'This is an unexpected pleasure, Mr. Davis; we thought you were speechifying to the free and enlightened electors of the borough of Riverley,' remarked Mr. Hamilton.

'Why, so I had intended, but we thought—that is, Gerard and Spencer did—that it would be better for me to be japanned before I started in full fig.'

'Japanned, Mr. Davis?' asked Gerard's father, with an expression of surprise.

'Japanned, Mr. Davis!' exclaimed Gerard's mother, with a look of curiosity.

'Japanned, Mr. Davis!' said Margaret in alarm.

'Nothing when you are accustomed to it, I can assure you, Miss Hamilton, as the fishmonger observed when he crimped the cod-fish,' said Tom with a grave face.

'Come, come, Tom,' said Margaret's brother, 'none of your tricks on travellers; confess to its being only a cant term for being bachelorized.'

'Or,' replied the incorrigible Tom, 'to state it as Gerard would—that is mathematically—B.A. equals japanning, M.A. equals dry rubbing, and Doctor equals polishing.'

'Really I must interdict the future M. P.'s visits,' remarked Mr. Hamilton, with an intendedly grave face, 'if he teaches my daughter such pretty phrases as japanning, dry-rubbing, and polishing.'

'Pure Saxon, Mr. Hamilton,—pure, unadulterated Saxon; if I had but time, I could prove their genealogy as clearly as Horne Tooke did that of Charlemagne, from the Greek pronoun *ουτος*. O it is a fine science philology.'

'Upon my honour, Davis, you are incorrigible,' said Gerard Hamilton; 'come back to your original errand.'

'A thousand pardons, Miss Hamilton; I am deputed, as the unworthy coxswain of the St. Luke's boat—how we did bump the Peterites, Spencer!—to convey to you, as the unremitting and tender nurse of their bold stroke—that will do, I think, Spencer?—their heartfelt gratitude and thanks for being the means of his being restored to his old place, nearly ready for another race: pray don't thank me, Miss Hamilton; I'm but a mere vehicle, as the cab observed—a mere vehicle of the thanks of the crew, the College, and a good part of the University—not the Peterites, I calculate—to the young lady who nursed the captain of the river.

'I think it is we, Mr. Davis, who ought to thank the captain for his exertions, and his crew for their timely assistance, when our young lady chose her free gratis cold-bath. But really young ladies now-a-days do blush so deeply, that the sooner you change the subject the better,' said Mr. Hamilton.

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'Ah that was my case in my early years,' observed Tom Davis.

'How do things look at Riverley, Mr. Davis? how goes the good cause?' inquired Mrs. Hamilton, with a degree of interest which arose more from the fact of Tom's having given her a fresh recipe for bottling gooseberries, than from any love for the opinions for which the battle was to be fought.

'Externally, rather badly; the Mowbrayites have got the Unitarian preacher, two attorneys, a drum, two fifes, one apothecary, three publics, a fiddle, one mayor, fourteen aldermen, and a round dozen of private tutors.'

'Private tutors, Mr. Davis!' exclaimed Mrs. Hamilton; 'what can they have to do with the election at Riverley?'

'Just as much as they have to do with every election in the kingdom. Did you ever travel in Yorkshire, Mrs. Hamilton? Well, when the horses make a stop at a bad piece of gravel, or a hill, "Joe," shouts the driver, "bring the private tutor;" whereupon down jumps Joe the guard, and comes forward with a short knotty whip, set on a long handle, runs by the sides of the horses, and applies the private tutor to their flanks—it is worth twice as much as the ears for a couple of mile of gravel.'

'The ears for a couple of mile of gravel!' exclaimed Mr. Hamilton in astonishment.

'An old saying and doing of Black Will, when any one used to say, "Will, why don't you touch them up on the ears?" "Take my advice, sir," he'd say; "take my advice—you'll thank me for it afterwards—always save your ears for a couple of miles of gravel."'

'But still, Mr. Davis,' said Margaret, 'I do not quite comprehend the application of these private tutors to electioneering.'

'Arguing from analogy—Gerard will tell you what that is—if a short whip with a long handle, alias a private tutor, is of great effect in persuading a half-dead stager to move out of a walk up Malton-hill—ergo, from analogy, a short bludgeon with a neat little head, in the hands of a well-dosed, well-paid chairman, or Irish hodman, is no bad assistant in persuading an unwilling voter to come up at once, and an over-zealous opponent to keep in-doors and not venture up to the poll.'

'How stands my dear cousin?' inquired Spencer, as soon as the party had composed their countenances and minds after Tom's learned lecture.

'Your dear cousin is a pretty considerable scamp—and if he does not go to —— the next hottest place after Gibraltar, why, as Sambo said, "there is no use in having a lieutenant-governor of Hades;" Sambo used shorter terms—'

'Well, but Davis, how does he stand?' inquired Spencer, in hopes of bringing Tom back to his subject.

'O, he musters tolerably strong; one Wesleyan, two aldermen, a trumpet, three black fiddlers, one attorney, one physician, and one parish clerk, a pair of cymbals, four publics, and a fair band of private tutors, under the command of his friend and ally Mark Redmond.'

'An old companion of his pocket-picking and smuggling doings, is he not?' asked Mr. Hamilton.

'The son of a gardener on the estate, who ran away with him to London, and was supposed to have been his seducer from my uncle's house,' replied Spencer.

'Take care how you say that now,' replied Davis; 'it is no longer Mark Redmond the gardener's son, but Captain Redmond, late of the Polish dragoons, with some two thousand a year, got no one knows how, a snug shooting-box, a good hunter and smart buggy, and smarter footman to match.'

'And now, Mr. Davis, may I ask you how the good cause goes on?' said the old gentleman, almost afraid of Tom's running so far ahead as not to be able to check him back to his first start.

'Fairly, in sober truth, miserably, as we report—that is our plan—no show—only the public—no band—working quietly like moles—keeping up the rivalry between the two radicals, hoping, when thieves fall out, that we honest men may come to our own,' replied the embryo member.

'I only hope you may be as successful, Davis, in Riverley, as I have been in London,' said Gerard, quietly unfolding a very official-looking letter.

'In what, Gerard?' inquired all the rest of the party.

'O, I have got that tutorship at St. Ethelred's college; there, my father, is the secretary's letter—it is very satisfactory,' replied Gerard, as he, with his accustomed coolness of demeanour, handed the opened letter to his father.

'God bless you, my dear Gerard; I do believe you deserve your good fortune,' exclaimed the old gentleman, as his over-excited feelings escaped in a fervent shake of his son's hand.

'My dear Gerard, you are a most fortunate person—most fortunate—you will be quite close to Doctor Dosemwell in London, and you can send me down his aqua at any time you are sending a parcel, or coming yourself, which will save me heavy carriage.'

'Dear brother!' said Margaret; 'dear brother!' she repeated, as with her hand clasped in his she looked up in his face with a mixed expression of love and respect.

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'Let me congratulate you, Gerard,' said Spencer, with a downright grasp.

'I don't know whether I shall congratulate you, Mr. Gerard Hamilton,' said Davis, putting on an intendedly severe air; 'to think of your keeping that letter in your pocket five hours and a half, and taking six hundred a year, besides cheatings, as the American consul said, as coolly as an invalid would his three hundred and twenty-first emetic. But come, on second thoughts, I think I will—on one condition, that you all come over to Newnham to-day, and celebrate the new tutorage.'

'And the embryo member at the same time,' said Spencer.

'That is as it may be; but how say you, Mr. Hamilton? you agree—and the ladies? O, Middleton answers for one—very well—and I think I may for the other—very well. You cannot, alias shall not, pull, Spencer—sit and steer;—well then, self, Hamilton—make him stroke—the new tutor—Cottrell and Melton a quiet set—get a six, four oars, room for sitters—Hamilton, you send down the furnishings, and do not forget the diggs.'

'Diggs, Mr. Davis?' inquired Mrs. Hamilton, with a mixed feeling of curiosity and alarm.

'Only the forks, madam, very necessary accompaniments—last party had to eat with skewers made out of the spare stretcher of the boat—sad case. Miss Hamilton, may I request you to resume your place of nurse over Spencer—he is not to be trusted yet alone. Come, Gerard, off to college about the furnishings—Spencer, bring down the ladies to Davis in half an hour—good-bye to all, good-bye—I'm off to the boat-house.' And so speaking, or rather rattling, away went the good-hearted Tom on his Newnham errand, whilst Hamilton, having received another hint about the diggs on leaving the entrance of the house, went contrariwise to Davis in search of the college cook, a scout, and a hamper.

During the Newnham expedition, which, like all its family and acquaintance, was concluded by a heavy shower of rain, as much noise was made, as much nonsense talked, as much cold fowls, ham, and chicken-pie discussed, as many bottles and glasses broken, as are absolutely necessary for the proper enjoyment of a pic-nic.

Spencer Middleton steered very badly; his errors were all on one side—Margaret Hamilton sat on the starboard side of the cutter.

Margaret Hamilton was the perfection of what is called a fine girl; her figure was tall and commanding, her features bold but not masculine, her bearing graceful, but firm and decided; whilst her dark lustrous eye, raven locks, high forehead, and pearly teeth, marked her for a beauty. And yet, had you taken her features separately, the examination would have proved far from satisfactory. See them when lighted up with her brilliant smile, in the blaze of a crowded ball-room, and then freely and unhesitatingly admit her to be a beauty. A good heart, a good temper, a good understanding, and a well-ordered mind, were the adornments which death alone could hope to destroy.

It would not only be tiresome, but almost impossible, to give you an idea of the various topics which were touched upon during the voyage. Politics, religion, love, law, and physic, education and architecture, all passed in order. One anecdote retailed by Davis, relating to education; and one conversation about love and matrimony, must be re-retailed. Because, peradventure, the one may make the pudding eatable, the other throw a light on our story.

'Our Sunday-schools are an honour to England—a blessing to our country,' said Mr. Hamilton.

'Certainly, sir,' replied Tom, slacking his rate of rowing, 'they tend to throw a new light on many portions of the scriptures, and to illustrate the moral feelings with which our nature is adorned.'

'I cannot see how,' remarked Gerard Hamilton.

'The power of secondary motives to influence our actions is constantly being illustrated in every Sunday-school in England, and indeed in every school where every kind of reward, from ten guineas worth of books to tea and buns once a quarter is substituted, as an incitement to learning, instead of acquiring knowledge for knowledge sake,' said Davis, with a most philosophic countenance.

'Something like rowing to Sandford for hot tankard and skittles, instead of for the exercise or the practising,' observed Spencer.

'Precisely so, Spencer,' was Tom's sober reply.'

'But the new lights thrown by them on the scriptures—to what do you allude,' Mr. Davis?' asked Mrs. Hamilton, totally unconscious of Tom's joke.

'New interpretations eliminated by the young mind subjected to scholastic training.'

'Of what kind, Mr. Davis?' asked the old lady, amid the hardly concealed smiles of the party.

'Such as Giles Scroggins' improvement of the Parable of the Prodigal.'

'Improvement—ah, I have often heard dear Mr. Goodenough improve on that subject.'

'No doubt, ma'am—and so did Giles Scroggins—at once combining the leading prin-

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ciples of political economy and scriptural interpretation.'

'Can you remember his view of the case, Mr. Davis?' inquired his victim, eagerly hunting for her pocket-book, in which to note down the new reading.

'Slack a little, master Gerard, while I comply with your mother's request, and endeavour to recall the elaborate disquisition of Giles Scroggins.'

It wanted not such an appeal from Tom the Story-teller to reduce the stroke to a quiet paddle, in order that all might hear and profit by the wondrous relation.

'Giles Scroggins,' said the relator—(a very pretty word in a story, but not so pleasing at the head of a charity information)—'Giles Scroggins was the only son of old Giles Scroggins, factotum to the parish of Wittingham cum Skillingham in Northamptonshire; when but a few weeks old, his round fair face, galidaceous eyes, embonpoint form, too clearly demonstrated the depth of his intellect, the resources of his brain. His youthful genius was primarily developed by one Martha Drivel, the learned head of a dame-school in the village. When, however, the cares of agricultural labour compelled his unwilling parents to deny him the pleasure of a daily course of education, the Sunday-school of his village was his only refuge. It chanced not long since that the lesson of the day was the story of the Prodigal; according to his wont, the Rev. Mr. Cresett the clergyman, previous to Morning Service, proceeded to question the pupils, the young gentlemen of the Sunday-School, concerning the facts of that delightful history. Pursuing the rotation system, it fell to the lot of Giles Scroggins to answer this question, "When the Prodigal son was entirely destitute, what did he do next?" Giles hesitated to reply. Mr. Cresett repeated his question. Still no reply. Mr. Cresett retraced the various steps of the miserable man's career, his departure from his father's house, his wasting of his property, his grateful acceptance of the degrading office of a swineherd, his satisfying his appetite on the husks. "And now when he was quite destitute," continued Mr. Cresett, "what did he do next—where did he go?" "I suppose," murmured Giles, with that meek low voice with which true worth ever puts forth its abilities, "I suppose he went to his parish."'

The unsuspected conclusion of Davis's anecdote so violently affected the risible nerves of Gerard as to render his stroke anything but correct; but this was a fault Tom never did and never could overlook; assuming to himself his old place as coxswain, his voice was heard above the laughter of the party, recalling the truant leader to his work, with many a word of reproof and good advice for the future.

'One would almost suppose you were in love,' he said to Gerard.

'Love, my dear fellow—why, I have no right to be in love yet,' replied Hamilton.

'No right?' said his father and his sister at the same time.

'No—what right have I to be engaging the affections of any girl, when I cannot expect to settle these five or six years?'

'Surely,' replied Margaret, 'if the lady pleases to have her affections engaged to you, you are perfectly at liberty to bind yourself and her to love one another, with a true faith, until fortune may allow you to be united.'

'Far from it,' replied her brother. 'I know young ladies delight in long courtships; in my idea they are very selfish matters. What right have I, or any one in my situation, to pay such devoted attention to a lady as to engage her love, to prevent her from settling in the world with some one else, much better suited to her than I am, much more her match perhaps in every respect?'

'If the old theory of the wife being the half that was originally torn from the perfect body is true, and our course after a mate is but a recovering of our complement, which is required for the due development of our happiness—how is it possible for the lady to be happy with any one but the person who has engaged her affections?'

'Though I cannot say, Spencer, that I think the theory worth refutation, yet let me give you my idea about the impossibility of the young lady whose affections are engaged being happy with any one else than the person to whom she is betrothed.'

'Come, Gerard,' said his father, 'do not develope your woman-hating notions.'

'Woman-hating, my dear father—far from that—it is entirely from my desire of not sacrificing woman to the self-love of those who flatter themselves that the dear Emma or Matilda could not be happy with any one but their own sweet self, that I make a point of declaring my opinion at every opportunity.'

'In my idea, Gerard, you are theoretically right; and what is more, could human nature allow us to reduce your theory to practice, and to abstain from pouring out our vows at the altar of our affections, long, long before we can hope to be united to our lady-love, we should not only escape much misery ourselves, but relieve those for whom we pretend to feel so acutely from a long life of anxiety and unrequited love.'

'Depend upon it, it is not real love that prompts us to bind down an unsuspecting, open-hearted girl to waste the best years of her life for us; it is mere selfishness, origi-

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nating from a false opinion of ourselves. We will flatter ourselves we are (as the ancients said) the complement of the broken figure, when, in reality, we are but one out of the many who would render the fabled form as complete, if not more so than ourselves.'

'You may argue, Gerard, you may theorize, as long as you please,' replied his sister, 'but as long as we have hearts, and men are flatterers, you will not stem the tide of long attachments, and I pray you never may.'

'I perfectly agree with you, Miss Hamilton,' said Spencer—'perfectly. What is more ennobling to the feelings, more purifying to the passions, than a devoted attachment—a beacon-star through dangers and distresses, to guide us to our haven, to encourage us to bear up even under the most trying misfortunes?'

Here the striking of the bow of the cutter against a shoal interrupted the conversation, which being far too serious for Davis, and not practical enough for Mrs. Hamilton, was not renewed during the expedition. Its effect on our hero—that is, the effect of Margaret's declaration—was most powerful; more consolatory than twenty of the largest family bottles of Mr. Hamilton's dear friend and ally Dr. Dosemwell's preparation of aqua pumpaginis. When our hero took leave of the Hamiltons on the following morning, he was one more instance of the truth of Margaret's declaration: peradventure he had in his mind Jacob de Voragine's twelve reasons for matrimony, and therefore as its proper antecedent for falling into love.

'If thou hast means,' says old Jacob, 'thou hast one to keep and increase them.'

'Hast thou none—thou hast one to help thee to get some.

'Art thou in prosperity—she will double it.

'Art thou in adversity—she will comfort thee, assist thee, bear part.

'Art thou at home—she will drive away melancholy.

'Art thou abroad—she will pray for thee, wish for thee to be at home, welcome thee with joy.

'Nothing is delightsome alone—no society is equal to marriage.

'The bond of conjugal love is adamantine.

'Kindred is increased, parents doubled—brothers, sisters, families, nephews.

'Thou art a father by a legal and happy issue.

'Barren matrimony is cursed by Moses; how much more a single life!

'If nature escapes not punishment, thy will shall not avoid it, as he sang it, that

'"Earth, air, sea, land, full soon will come to naught,
The world itself would be to ruin brought."'

CHAPTER XIV.

Preparations are made for the election of Riverley.

The town of Riverley was suffering under excitement. From the window of the Middleton Arms hung out a flaunting yellow banner, the ensign of the squire's party, having on its folds, Liberty and Equality, and no Corn Laws. Every brick of the house contributed to the support of one or more square yards of thin paper, disfigured with such appeals, as 'Vote for the poor man's friend—Middleton for ever—no Corn Laws—Cheap Bread—Reform—Annual Parliaments—Vote by Ballot.' The candidate on this side the market-place stood on the thoroughgoing Radical interest. Underneath the windows and round about the doors of the old house stood a motley group of seven-shillings-a-day supporters, whose particular orders were to cheer their own man, mob the other side, and pelt the parsons.

Vis-à-vis to the yellow flag was the blue and buff banner of the Mowbrays, suspended from the balcony of the Liberia Hotel. The legend was 'Reform and Retrenchment.' 'The people the true source of legitimate power—Representative Reform, Freedom of Election, Abolition of Taxation,' were the baits offered by the Buffs and Blues to their supporters. Unlimited supplies of ale, porter, and gin, contributed to keep alive the enthusiasm of the *ni l'une, ni l'autre* party, whilst the well-leaded staves of their private tutors contributed to the true keeping in order of their own refractory voters, and the intimidation of their opponents.

Such were the central committee-rooms of the two liberal parties, whose sub-committees infested every hole and corner of the town.

As for the constitutional party, it was difficult to discover their whereabout; their existence might almost be doubted, were it not for certain large posters, still half visible under the yellow and blue and buff papers, which, when entire, informed the independent freemen of Riverley of the fact of Mr. T. Davis being a candidate for the honour of representing them in parliament. Indeed, in a bye-street there might be seen a house with one or two announcements in its windows, of the fact of Mr. Davis's committee sitting there daily—a fact religiously believed by those few who hoped to have an opportunity of registering their votes in favour of the good cause, and equally disbelieved by both parties of the liberals.

The electors of the borough of Riverley and its liberties were its corporation and freemen, some two hundred in all. In the pre-

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vious contests, when the houses of Middleton and Mowbray led the opposing bands, the numbers were so equal that the contest had been generally decided by an elegant band of a dozen low voters, who waited on Providence and voted for the highest bidder, or compromised by each family returning one member. The latter alternative had been resorted to at the last election, and the honourable Augustus Fox Mowbray and one Sir Thomas Beacham represented the borough of Riverley, and the interest of the Mowbrays and Middletons.

The change of the lord at the hill had been hailed with delight by the Mowbrays. He had declared himself on their side—at least one able to be comprehended under the large class of liberals: both seats were now safe for their side, for who, said my lord, can oppose the united interests of Middleton and Mowbray?'

Now it happened at this time, that a certain place in the ministry of the day—as we are not going to be political, our friends must not require a more particular description—was vacant by the death of an old Whig—they are not to be found now like the Dodo, only the claw left as a curiosity. This place must be filled—that was the rub; parties ran rather too equal in the house to be pleasant, or to allow either side to play tricks, so his Majesty refrained from filling up the place, for the good of his prime minister.

'My dear fellow,' said the primus when the Duke of Chink's eldest son, Lord Hardup, applied for the place, 'your seat is not safe.'

'D—n my constituents!' replied his lordship.

'Precisely so,' said the minister.

'My dear lord,' said the Hon. Augustus Mowbray, 'that place would just suit me.'

'Not a doubt of it,' said the First Lord of the Treasury, 'but you only got in last time by a compromise.'

'Things are changed, my lord; the old Tory is dead, and one of our side has succeeded to his place and property, so that both seats are safe.'

'That alters the case materially,' replied the minister; 'you shall have it.'

So his Majesty was pleased to appoint the Hon. Augustus Mowbray to the vacant place.

The Hon. Augustus had told only a part of the truth; he omitted the episode of the drag-net.

The day of the nomination drew on—all parties began to count heads. To begin with my lord's son's friends, they were in high feather; seventy-five promises appeared in their books; they had never started with so many before: they forgot that they had never before canvassed so closely.

Then came the squire's account, sixty good and true men, averaging about ten pounds a head, decidedly bargains, and so precious that fifteen of them were kept under lock and key at the central committee-room, lest gold and brandy should charm away their hearts. The Mowbray party were all my lord's tenants, the squire's, but few of the Middleton tenantry, some fifteen to twenty, whose short term and poor means did not permit them to brave the squire's anger; the rest were the few thorough-bred radicals of the town, and the elegant extracts who generally waited on Providence, but who now sided with the squire for a *consideration*.

Slowly, quietly, and steadily, had the constitutional party worked; no show, no expense, no blustering; their own organ, the county paper, spoke most despairingly of their prospects. 'There was, indeed, a chance,' the editor said, 'but it was but a poor one.' 'Nil desperandum' was indeed their motto, but the intimidation of the lords of the land was too powerful to be resisted. With such deplorations as these, Davis's friends contrived to turn away the attention of their opponents from their proceedings. Their prospects were not really so gloomy: could they but keep alive the enmity of the other parties, they might hope to run them both close. They mustered fifty-five good and true men, willing to run every risk, endure any trouble, and risk some expense, rather than allow so fair an opportunity to escape them of rescuing the borough from the hands of the so-called Liberals.

The present squire's predecessors had full and great confidence in the characters of their tenants, and in their willingness to merge private differences of opinion in support of those to whom they looked, and not in vain, for assistance and consolation, when sorrow, poverty, or sickness fell on any of them. The lords of Mowbray had no confidence in their tenants, and justly. So the one granted long leases at good rents, the others yearly tenancies at low ones; when, therefore, the power at the Hill changed hands, the tenantry did not change their opinions so readily as the squire might have hoped; it had taken many lives of good men in succession to fix their principles in the hearts of their tenantry. And now that the powerful inducement of intimidation had lost all its terrors from the kindness of the last squire, it was no easy matter to make the Middleton tenantry swerve from their old opinions.

'Good morning to you, Mr. Silverley,' said Dr. O'Clysterall the physician, who lived on the Mowbray side of the market-place, now chairman of the Honourable Augustus's committee, and leader of a band

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of canvassers which included the *Rev.* Ebenezer Blackhair, the Wesleyan minister, two aldermen, and an attorney, who now took the opportunity of waiting on Mr. Silverley for his vote and interest in favour of the Honourable Augustus Mowbray.

'Good morning to you, Dr. Clysterall—good morning to you, gentlemen,' replied the owner of the beautiful mansion, in the library of which the party were assembled.

'My good friends and myself'—here the party bowed in unison—'have come more from respect to one who so long and so ably has supported the cause of civil and religious liberty, than from any doubt as to which party in the ensuing contest will be enabled, through your assistance, to acquire the honour of the representation of Riverley. May we solicit the vote and interest of the father of the Whigs in this county, for the Honourable Augustus Mowbray, whom his majesty has been pleased to appoint one of his under-secretaries of state?'

'Surely, gentlemen,' replied the old gentleman, 'this visit was unnecessary—you must be well aware that my political opinions—'

'Precisely so, Mr. Silverley,' interrupted Dr. Clysterall.

'Precisely so,' chorused the entire deputation.

'Have undergone considerable alteration since the last election.'

'Alteration, Mr. Silverley!' gasped the doctor.

'Alteration,' chorused the deputation.

'Yes, gentlemen, considerable alteration.'

'Surely, Mr. Silverley,' said the Rev. Ebenezer Blackhair, 'you will not vote for the Papist squire—the old Tory's descendant?'

'Were Mr. Middleton,' calmly replied the voter, 'the representative of the opinions of his family as well as of their possessions, I should have undoubtedly registered my vote for him at the approaching election.'

'O, you've turned Tory, have you?' growled Dr. Clysterall.

'I am no longer a Whig, and am not likely to be a Radical,' replied Mr. Silverley.

'Ah, that's all very well,' began the doctor, getting into a rage.

'Nay, nay, doctor,' said the Wesleyan minister; 'nay, nay, allow me to ask *my* old friend why he has deserted *his* old friends?'

'It would be a long story, Blackhair—too long for the present opportunity.'

'Nay, nay, Silverley, you can sum up in some short sentence—some short declaration.'

'Well then, Blackhair, look out of that window—what do you look on?—the old estate on which my fathers were bred and born, never as yet burdened with debt, or enfeebled by mortgage; I wish to keep it so, and at the rate you are now going, in ten years' time where would it be? Good morning to you, gentlemen—I hope to be the first to poll for the Tory on Tuesday. Good morning.'

'Mr. Smith at home, young man?' asked Alderman Spindle of the Middleton baker's chief assistant, as, head of the squire's committee, he led his select band of canvassers round the market-place.

'O, good morning, Mr. Smith—Mrs. Smith quite well?—and all the little Smiths?—That's right. We have come, Mr. Smith, to solicit your vote and interest for the old family. A mere matter of form, I am sure—never saw such unanimity among the tenantry before—did you ever, Sneer?'

'Never,' said the Unitarian preacher.

'I am very sorry, gentlemen, to have given you so much trouble, but I am afraid that I shall not be able to vote for Squire Middleton.'

'Not vote for the squire!' exclaimed Mr. Spindle.

'Not vote for civil and religious liberty!' exclaimed Mr. Sneer.

'Not vote for no corn laws!' screamed Mr. Steampower the manufacturer.

'No, Mr. Steampower,' replied the baker, 'I shall not vote for no corn laws, because setting aside the right to protection which the farmers have as well as you manufacturers, I have no wish to reduce the poor man to no-corn law wages.

Mr. Steampower looked disgusted at the poor man's ignorance.

'As for civil liberty, I can now do what I like, so I transgress not the law—and for other liberty than that I am not anxious; as for religious liberty, I hardly comprehend its meaning.'

'It is the liberty of prophesying against the idolatrous practices and brutal tyranny of a bloated church!' exclaimed Mr. Sneer.

'Which I presume means the permission to abuse the clergy, and disseminate every blasphemous notion, unrestrained by the arm of the law,' replied Mr. Smith.

'As for voting for the squire, Mr. Spindle, I should have been glad to have voted for one so much my superior in rank and wealth, and from whom and whose ancestors I have received great kindness, and with whose family I have been proud to vote these thirty years; but, on your own principle of civil liberty, you must respect those opinions which for thirty years I have held.'

'You must not be surprised, Mr. Smith, if your old friends desert you if you desert them—not that I mean to say that the squire will not extend his patronage even to his opponents, but still friends first is but fair play.'

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'All which means, Mr. Spindle,' coolly replied the baker, 'that unless I vote for the squire, or abstain altogether from voting, I may as well send in my bill to the hall, and strike the name of Middleton out of my books.'

'I am sure I never said so,' said the alderman.

'Because you hardly dared, Mr. Spindle—but you meant it. Perhaps I may not vote at all.'

'You'll remember, Mr. Smith,' said Sneer, 'he that is not for us is against us.'

'Yes, the devil can quote scripture when it suits him; I shall certainly vote for Mr. Davis. Anything more, gentlemen, that I can do for you? Good morning.'

That evening Smith went to the quiet committee-room in the back street, and tendered his vote to the constitutional party.

'We are exceedingly obliged to you, Smith,' said the vicar, who generally came down of an evening to see how matters were going; 'but will you not be injured by voting for us?'

'Perhaps I may be, sir; but I hope I know my duty—I would rather live on dry bread than vote against my church and my king.'

'Well, Smith,' said Silverley, 'if you are turned out of your house come to me—Silverley still owns a house or two in the town.'

'Many thanks, sir;' replied Smith; 'turn me out they cannot—the old squire renewed my lease about three months before he died; they can but strike me out of the steward's books at the hall, and get their bread from Peterson. However, they won't ruin old Smith quite so easily as they think. Good night, gentlemen—I will be forthcoming when I am wanted. Success to the old cause!'

The nomination of the candidates was cousin-german to every nomination that has taken place in our time. The Red party occupied one side of the hustings and the market-place, the Buffs the other side, whilst squeezed up behind the mayor's place stood Davis, his proposer and seconder, the entire representatives of the Blue party on the hustings. Among the crowd net a Blue bow was to be seen. But there could not be a doubt that certain stout honest-looking forms and faces, dotted here and there among the parties, belonged neither to the Reds nor the Buffs. These represented the Blues among the crowd of the market-place.

The mayor opened the day by informing the people of the object of their meeting, of the fact of his most gracious Majesty having been pleased to appoint their late member to be one of the under-secretaries of state, of the consequent vacancy in the representation, of the new writ, and of the present meeting. He then desired all parties to give fair play to one another, and hear all the gentlemen had to say, made his bow amid unanimous cheers, and retired from the front centre.

Ebenezer Blackhair then came forward amid the discordant yells of the Reds, and the equally discordant applause of the Buffs. After a considerable portion of pantomimic gestures, openings and shuttings of the mouth, violent flinging about of the hands and arms, and mysterious pointings over his shoulder at the late member, he retired unscathed, and was charitably supposed by the mayor to have nominated the Honourable Augustus Mowbray as a fit and proper person to represent the borough of Riverley in Parliament.

To the Wesleyan succeeded Dr. O'Clysterall, who being an odd sort of character, and an Irishman to boot, would be heard, and was heard accordingly.

It was a very curious composition that self-same speech—so curious that trouble should have been taken to preserve it pure and unadulterated as it fell from the doctor's lips, had it not been for the daily new editions of it, with additions, emendations, and alterations, by various hands, which are being vomited forth, in our sister isle, at the condolence meetings now so rife at the Corn Exchange in Dublin. The Emerald Isle, its seven millions of bauld pisantry, tithes, titheproctors, fire-raising, agitation, the slave-trade, reform, the church, and the chimney-sweeps, passed in rapid succession through the doctor's speech, amid the cheers of the Buffs, and the mingled hisses and laughter of the Reds, whenever the doctor betrayed his father-land by a bull.

The nomination on the part of the Middletons and the Davises admitted of but one variation from that of their opponents. No one was heard. The well-tuned lungs of the Mowbrayites contrived most effectually to drown the cries of the Middleton nominator and seconder. How much greater, therefore—(see seventh proposition of the first book of Euclid)—how much greater, therefore, was the success of the united, for once united parties, against the two impudent Blues, who dared to nominate a Tory for Riverley?

At last the deed was done—the three candidates stood their proper and reasonable time in front of the hustings, during which time they were supposed to have spoken the three long speeches which graced, each, their own paper. The mayor took the show of hands, and giving his friends the benefit of the doubt, declared the election to have fallen on the Honourable Augustus Mowbray. Whereupon Alderman Spindle demanded a poll on behalf of George Middleton, Esq., amid the

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cheers of the Reds; and William Downright, maltster and freeman, demanded the same on behalf of Thomas Davis, Esq., to the great amusement of both parties. The mayor, having declared the poll for ten o'clock on the morrow, all parties voted him their thanks, and having nothing better to do, the Reds and the Buffs got up an amateur Waterloo in the market-place, in which many oaths and more blows were given and received, a few windows broken, but no heads, more from the solidity of the capita than from the badness of the weapons, or weakness of those who wielded them in the fray.

Leaving all parties to prepare for the contest of the morrow—for according to old charter the election must be taken between the hours of ten and three in the day succeeding the nomination—let us conclude this chapter with a conversation accidentally overheard between one Dennis M'Shane and Ephraim Sneak, as they sat hobnobbing over brandy-and-water at the Three Periwinkles in Lower Stone Street, Riverley.

'M'Shane, I'm in a precious fix—take another glass of the liquor.'

'What the devil's the row?' replied Dennis, mixing his glass on Mynheer Van Dunck's principle.

'Why, look'ee—there's a man as lives at Wellingborough as has got a paper, a great big deed, as would prove in a jiffy that Mister Middleton can't stand for a parliament member.'

'How d'ye mean?'

'No qualification's the word, and so upset without any trouble.'

'Humph!' replied Dennis.

'Well, now the man as will bring that here afore three o'clock to-morrow would get one hundred pounds from somebody as I knows of.'

'Vell, vhy don'tee go for't?'

'Can't—that precious stone's nigh broke my leg—couldn't ride ten mile—much less nigh on to forty, and bad roads.'

'Art sure all right?'

'All right as a trivet—overheard Spindle a talking about it to Sneer. Now, thinks I, I'm agoing to vote for the squire, cause vhy? I can't do otherwise—cause vhy? he's agoing to trot out all as wont wote for him.'

'Vell,' said Dennis, 'shall I go?'

'Vhy, lookee—you is a Mowbray man, I'm a Middleton—vell, one wote wouldn't perhaps matter a bit, but still, if I could make more out of the lord than out of the squire, why I would——'

'Of course,' said Dennis.

'Now, I know's one hundred down would be given for that deed, and mayhap more, if you fetch it—you're a Mowbray man, therefore it's all right—nothing said about who told you of it.'

'Well?' said Dennis.

'Well then, I'll give you twenty down, and twenty more when you bring back the paper, if you'll ride off to-night to Wellingborough to Sam Patch's, and ask for a square parcel, directed to E. Sneak. You bring that here—take it to Blackhair—he's your head man—claim a hundred down, take twenty yourself and give me the rest. I'll trust you.'

'Make it twenty-five down.'

'No, no,' said Sneak, 'twenty's enough—besides, I can't sell the squire for less than sixty.'

'But what's to hinder my riding off, and not giving you nothing at all?'

'No, no—you won't do that,' replied Sneak, to all appearance at a nonplus, 'honour among——'

'Rogues,' said Dennis; 'make it twenty-five down, or I'm off on my own game.'

'Very hard, Dennis; but I suppose I must. Well, here's the money—come, are you ready?—Tom Gerard's horse is waiting for me.—Push him on to Allerton—that's fifteen miles. Go to Gerard's at the Bull, and ask for a horse ordered by me two days ago—that'll carry you to Postle, where Tom Patch will forward you to Wellingborough—have your relays ready to return, and do be back before the end of the poll to morrow.'

Ephraim Sneak got his man off.

'Come, come,' said Ephraim to himself, 'not so bad neither—he'll get to Gerard's. Well Gerard 'll send him to Postle, where, if he cannot make him stay, Tom 'll forward him to his brother's; and if he gets back before three to-morrow, though he has forty-eight hours, I've no faith in a roughened saddle and bad roads.'

Ephraim Sneak did not seem much to care about the chance of his friend's not being likely to return before the election was over.

Ephraim made an entry in his book—'To doctoring a man, forty pounds,'

It was truly astonishing how many men left Riverley that night in search of square parcels, some directed to the chairman of the Reds, some to that of the Buffs, and others to such disinterested persons as our friend Ephraim Sneak.

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HOW TO GET UP A PIC-NIC.

BY LEIGH CLIFFE, ESQ.

To get up a Pic-Nic with taste and effect,
A receipt from my grandmother's book I'll select,
As 'tis just now the season to boat it, and shiver
Like true human aspens while rowed up the river;
While your teeth chatter music, as though they were taking
A lesson from Grisi, and practising shaking,
And the wind blows around you so charmingly keen,
That winter seems placed, like a sandwich, between
Fading summer and autumn, while, pleasure to heighten,
You pick up *rheumatics* to *bathe* off at Brighton.
My grandmother writes, (she eloped, but we'll pardon her,
With the sexton this year, who is Mister Death's gardener,
In the prime of her life, for but sixty-nine years
Were the quantum allowed her in this vale of tears,)
'Collect so many persons, by courtesy *friends*,
Who've the organ of action, and can make both ends
Meet in one little circle, or can at least edit
Their tailor's account for a half-year's more credit;
Who can tick it with Scott for champagne and tokay,
And buy port in the most economical way,
Pass Cape, with its 'bacco-box' flavour, for fine
Ten years' bottled Xeres, and swear 'tis divine
As the Nectar that's quaff'd at state-dinners by Jove:—
And be sure get together all couples in love,
And widows, whose weeds, if soon *weeded*, would speak
In raptures of Pic-Nics that bring what folk seek.
You may sprinkle some widows, *unwidow'd*, —id est,
Who have parted from convoy, like vessels, off Brest;
As 'tis not *infra dig.* you may too, if you please,
Mix up in your medley a few *divorcees*,
For there can be no harm. in arranging society,
To include those who've purchas'd a known notoriety.
Get some half-dozen *blues*, a few actors from over
The water,—some fiddlers, some singers,—moreover
A play-wright or two, would be all very well,
And a small Spanish Don who can cut a great swell;
But be sure that the man is *bestarr'd* and *beorder'd*,
And his lips with full curling moustachios bordered.
If you can get a man with a *title*, exhibit him,
And puff him, and praise him, and stuff him *ad libitum*,
If you could find a Jewess, with but little trouble,
Whom you might, with some decency, pass as the *double*
Of RACHEL, just veil her, and get up a scene,—
As when *Marie* shows fight to old *Bessy* the Queen:—
Let her stamp, shake her fist, snap her fingers, and stare,
And do half the tragedy,—*minus* the prayer.
Should her French be *patois*, and her accent not true,
Keep her back till the men may be told black is blue;
And then, like a *coup de soleil*, she'll dimiuish
The *ennui* that creeps on when dinner you finish,
Bringing on, from the slumber to which it gives birth,
A fine aldermanic third heaven on earth!
Ventriloquists really are *passés*;—the passion
Is now to bring nothing but odd things in fashion;
Learned horses and asses will tell well;—before
'Twas Arabs and Indians,—they're now thought a bore:
But the most novel thing which this season I've heard, is
A *Duo Concertante* for two hurdygurdies,

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Have plenty of dancers, and try for JOHN PARRY,
Whose 'wanted a wife' may give hints that men marry,
And *petites affaires du cœur* often will
Make the fingers twine close in the second quadrille.

But I've not spoken yet of the funds—without money,
Pleasure's hive would not swarm with the drones seeking honey;
Make it *cheap* to the eye—a mere nothing—so under
Their *own* calculation, that men and girls wonder
Why such economical parties were never,
Red-letter'd, like saints' days and Sundays, by clever
Concoctors of omens, and signs of the weather.
The grand secret is this. Have some little additional
Claims on each purse—for the *right* is traditional;—
Half-crowns for some ices, or white-bait;—a trifle
By way of subscription for poor Mrs. Rifle,
Who has *three living husbands*, all married before,
And three children by each, and expecting one more;
Small extras for things which must never appear,
And your Pic-Nic per centage will serve every year
To replenish your purse at the close of the season,
And your friends to remember you long will have reason.'

MEMORIES OF GIBRALTAR.

No. V.

THE PLAGUE.

BY MRS. FRANCES ELIZABETH DAVIES.

IT is always so much more pleasing to recall gay and romantic subjects than narratives which evoke sad memories, that it is not surprising that those of the plague of 18—, which, by chronological order, should have taken precedence of my former numbers, remain still untouched. Yet, as I intend these papers to be strictly records of real life, and as life is, at the best, but a mingled tale of pleasure and pain, so must I weave my varied web with threads, some dark, some bright, hoping that, when all is done, the fashion of the work may chance to win the favour of the public.

'Welcome, my dear Clara, a thousand times! I have such a beau for you! so prepare—not for conquest, that is achieved already—but to be conquered, for I assure you Captain Delorme is determined to assail your heart with all the strategy of war.'

The speaker was the wife of Major Herbert, the person addressed was her guest, and, though some years her junior in age, had been one of her girlhood's friends.

'And who, pray, may be Captain Delorme?'

'Not to know Captain Delorme would indeed be to argue yourself unknown, were he not a new arrival in the garrison. Regimentally, I assure you he is a person of some importance, on account of his taste and admiration of our sex. He landed from Lisbon only yesterday, and is already smitten with a certain fair maiden, whom, it seems, he and the major encountered on the saluting battery—an ominous place, was it not?'

'Very,' laughed Clara. 'But I fear that I am somewhat ungrateful, for if the person I saw there yesterday be Captain Delorme, the impression which I received of him was by no means flattering to his self-love.'

'Well, well, all in good time; the captain dines with us to-day, and you will have an opportunity of forming a more accurate estimate of his merits.'

'But which, I suspect, is by no means likely to reach that which the captain's *amour propre* has established in his own opinion.'

'You are severe;—but *allons*, time does wonders.'

A more intimate acquaintance, however, with her admirer, failed to procure for Captain Delorme a better acceptance with his fair enslaver; and albeit that he wooed in downright earnest, consulting Clara's whims and propitiating her tastes with the most persevering assiduity, she continued to retreat from his attentions just as pertinaciously as he pursued—a coyness which, perhaps, acted as an additional provocative, and would doubtless have proved very charming, had it only been what her adorer's amatory experience instructed him to believe it, i. e. merely feigned. But, unfortunately for him, what

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he intended for captivating advances, she construed into unauthorized persecution, thus deepening her unfavourable impressions, until what was at first a mere girlish caprice, soon became confirmed into permanent dislike.

If he appeared on the terrace during her promenade, it was not that she merely avoided him, but she literally ran away. She was passionately fond of flowers, and every morning he presented her a votive offering, culled from the choicest parterres; but they were destined to wither in her vases, untended for the sake of him by whom they had been selected.

And when her pet kid accidentally fell over a precipice, and was strangled by the cord that ought to have confined its rambles, 'What a pity it was not the lamb!' she exclaimed, utterly forgetful of the cruelty of her remark in remembrance that the poor creature had been a gift from Delorme—an involuntary crime, however, for which, in her remorse, she received the unconscious animal into distinguished favour—upon which event the presumptuous lover founded so much hope, that he actually had the temerity to solicit a lock of her hair, a request that was most indignantly refused by Clara; and on subsequently discovering that he had surreptitiously obtained that favour through the instrumentality of her mother, who warmly favoured his suit, the angry girl burst into a passion of tears, and refused to be pacified until assured that her persecutor was on the wing for England.

'Where I trust he will remain, and that I may never again behold his ugly face!' she petulantly exclaimed.

'Fie, Clara!' replied her mother. 'I have explained to you a hundred times that the captain is an exceedingly eligible person, and nothing but your extreme youth can excuse your childish behaviour.'

'I know I am a child,' retorted Clara; 'I don't want to be considered anything else. I neither care for eligible nor ineligible persons. I hate to be followed, and bored, and stared at, and quizzed, and tormented, and teased about him, an antiquated fright! Why cannot he go and jabber his nonsense to some old woman of his own age?'

'Foolish girl! have you no ambition to follow the example of your friend, Mrs. Herbert, and other girls of your acquaintance?'

'No, indeed! I would rather have a merry dance than listen to all the fine compliments that ever were paid. I *know* that I am a pretty girl—everybody says so, and so I suppose I am; but I don't want to be told that morning, noon, and night. I hate a person to be always goggling at me, and whispering, and making mysteries where there are none, and I should detest an Adonis if he were for ever dangling at my side—and as for Captain Delorme—'

'Well, well, child, the captain sails for England to-morrow, having obtained twelve months' leave of absence; when he returns, I trust you will be better able to appreciate the honour of his addresses.'

'The honour of his addresses! Now really, mother, the daughter of Captain Belmore cannot be much elevated by such a distinction.'

'Pshaw, child! go to your birds; there is no use in talking sense to a baby!'

Glad to be released from attentions so odious, Clara enjoyed renewed happiness after the departure of her admirer, who left her, vowing all the constancy and devotion that might have flattered a more experienced belle, but which was utterly lost upon the youthful despot; and from the hour when he breathed his farewell, he was as much forgotten by her as if such a person had never existed, or only recalled to her recollection by some mischievous friend, who laughingly inquired when she had heard from the captain, an incident which served to render his name still more disagreeable.

At intervals packages of new books and music arrived, with letters to Captain Belmore; for, egotistical as was the lover, he did not venture to address Clara herself, nor in his letters was she more than distantly mentioned, he well knowing that her father, a punctilious soldier of the old school, would have resented any avowed pretension to the hand of a girl so young. It was, therefore, only in very general terms that he mentioned his solicitude respecting the welfare of the family, and to Mrs. Belmore that all offerings of remembrance were presented.

Meanwhile Clara improved both mentally and personally, and soon learned to estimate her own pretensions—in fact, as her mother had shrewdly enough insinuated, twelve months wrought an amazing change with her in every respect, except in her appreciation of Captain Delorme; for when he returned, though she would no longer have run away from him, she had learned to repel the freedom of his advances without resigning an iota of her own dignity; and her very first act, when he presented himself before her, was to evince her preference for the conversation of a young naval beau, in so maliciously marked a manner, as sent him home to his quarters in a fit of jealousy or jaundice, which confined him to his bed for three days.

On the fourth he presented himself, armed for a gallant attack, in virtue of a pair of new

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wings and a formidable sable, which signalized his appointment to the command of the grenadier company—a cheap honour, which the governor (not General Don, be it understood,) had conferred as a reply in full to a whole budget of recommendatory letters, by which the captain's influential friends designed to have secured for him some more solid advantage than the empty and most inappropriate distinction which they won for their protégé.

Of the ridicule which this appointment provoked, his excellency was quite unconscious, not being in the habit of dispensing those hospitalities which would have brought him into personal contact with his officers, and for which the government-house, under the succeeding *regime*, became so honourably remarkable. On Delorme's return from England, his excellency was indeed provided with an excellent apology for the exclusion of visitors, being confined at home by illness which terminated in his decease. For these reasons, therefore, he remained quite unaware that the gentleman whom he had placed at the head of one of the finest grenadier companies in the service, was minus at least five inches of the standard of beauty; a circumstance of which Delorme did not think it requisite to apprise him, for the simple reason that it would have been made difficult to have convinced himself, that his height was not the just medium between the ungainly tall and the insignificantly diminutive. Yet some suspicion of the true state of the case may have glanced through his mind upon his first muster of his new company, when he found himself placed in juxtaposition with his junior subaltern, who measured six feet four without his shoes, and whose gigantic stature was rendered still more conspicuous by the meagre lankness of his person, and the superabundant enormity of his huge grenadier cap.

The manner in which this singularly awkward looking personage used to bend down to receive the orders of his commanding officer was perfectly irresistible; and if any adjunct had been required to exhibit Delorme unfavourably to his lady love, the absurdity of his position would have supplied such a deficiency.

It was indisputable that the redoubted hero, Thomas Thumb, was most efficiently personated by Captain Delorme, who, nevertheless, quite unconsciously became the subject of the most comical and extravagant inventions. One story, which gained particular circulation, and even some belief—went, that on a general field-day, during a high wind, the subaltern's cap having fallen off, the grenadier captain was suddenly missed from his situation, and after some inquiry was discovered safely housed under the monstrous headcovering of his junior officer.

Happily the bump of self-esteem presents a most excellent preservative against the assaults of wit and waggery; and while the garrison was convulsed with laughter, Delorme simply added a little to the heels of his boots, and a little to the height of his cap—and then unflinchingly maintained his appointment.

Scarcely, however, was he fully installed in his new honours, before he took the desperate determination of stating his proposals to Captain Belmore, and for that purpose solicited an early interview. When this fact was announced to Clara, she became greatly alarmed, because she both loved and feared her father, and she could neither endure the idea of disobeying him, nor determine upon committing her happiness to the keeping of a partner so every way repugnant as her *soi-disant* admirer.

When summoned, therefore, into her parent's presence, she felt like a criminal about to receive condemnation; and deeply did she contemn the meanness, as she termed it, of the spirit that could, in defiance of her unconcealed aversion, persist in pretending to her acceptance, and thus call in the aid of parental authority, where his merits had failed to secure him a preference; for Clara, be it known, no longer reasoned like a child; she had latterly been amazingly enlightened by the teachings of her naval admirer, who, to youth and many personal graces, added a superabundance of romance sufficient to have turned the head of a wiser and more staid person than Clara Belmore.

To George Wilder, the name of Captain Delorme had long been as distasteful as it was to Clara herself, and now that they had met face to face, aspirants to the same prize, the delinquencies of the latter found in him a ready and unsparing critic.

To these animadversions, Clara listened with a favouring ear, drawing secret comparisons between the two, in which the captain was every way a sufferer. When, however, she found herself in the presence of her father, and listened to his calm and dispassionate expositions of Delorme's views, to the causes why he deemed such worthy of her acceptance, and to his affectionate admonitions to discard from her mind all prejudice while she gave his proposals an attentive consideration, she could not but own that many of her own arguments fell entirely to the ground, while others were so weak and untenable, that she was ashamed to advance them as arguments in support of her refusal.

Her repugnance, however, was too strong to be concealed, and tears streamed in torrents over her pale cheeks. Her father neither ex-

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postulated nor entreated—he contented himself with proving the mere facts of the case—dwelt on his own waning health—his want of fortune to endow his children—the friendless position of his family so far from home, in the contingency of his life being cut off—and concluded by giving her three days to reflect and deliberate, intimating that he had taken means to prevent her judgment being influenced by an untimely persecution, having forbidden the captain's visit until the expiration of the indicated period.

Nor was Delorme the only visitor so excluded; for wisely considering that the weapon of ridicule is one of the most dangerous that can be applied to a hesitating mind, Captain Belmore had judged it expedient to place his young friend George Wilder under an equal restraint, and, on the morning appointed for the momentous decision, was perhaps not sorry to receive a P. P. C. visit, his vessel being under sailing orders, and affording no time for any confidential communications. To George and Clara this event was deeply distressing, but winds and waves wait not for lovers' vows, consequently theirs were brief indeed.

The intervening period had been passed by Clara chiefly in listening to her mother's thrice-told eulogium on the merits of the suitor whom she favoured, and, exhausted by the contention, and perhaps by the parting from George, to whom she believed herself irrevocably attached, she threw herself at her father's feet, imploring him, in the most pathetic terms, not to condemn her to become the wife of a man who, whatever might be his good qualities, she found it impossible to receive with the smallest regard.

To this appeal the father's heart was not insensible, and though disappointed and distressed, he raised his daughter in his arms, and pledged his word that so long as life and health were granted him, she should never be persecuted by any suit which could by possibility be fatal to her repose.

After this event, Captain Delorme was made to understand that any attentions beyond those of friendship would be deemed offensive, and that only upon his promise to respect Miss Belmore's decision could his future visits be permitted.

Conscious that his most dangerous rival was now removed, and resting on the secret influence which he maintained in the good graces of Mrs. Belmore, Delorme was glad to accept the *entrée* on any terms, and readily availed himself of the privileges thus accorded, while Clara, relieved from his persecutions, and of all apprehensions respecting him, received him with complacency, apparently willing to show her desire to repair to the mere acquaintance those uncourteous slights which she had thought fit to bestow upon the unwelcome lover.

But now a question arose, that absorbed all other feelings in the one interest that pervaded the garrison. An awful rumour was in mysterious circulation. Men clustered together in corners, and conversed in grave whispers, suddenly breaking off their discourse when joined by a new-comer, or affecting obstreperous mirth, to hide the apprehension that was daily growing more apparent.

Families were abruptly departing from the Rock, some to England, and—though it was by no means safe on account of the war—some into Spain—or, failing vessels home, even to the Mediterranean.

The doctors were observed to be stealthily alert, and affectedly idle. Looks were responded to by looks, and each seemed fearful of fashioning his thoughts into speech. Daily the parades grew less formal, and all duties, not absolutely necessary to the good order of the garrison, were fast falling into disuse. The officers were no longer seen promenading in merry groups. Parties were abolished—the soldiers were kept close to their barracks—mirth had fled—business was suspended—the shops were closed—the merchants' stores shut up—the streets became silent as the grave—and desolation was fast spreading itself over the place of doom.

Then came the appointment of lazarettos to receive the sick—the drafting of regiments for volunteers, to the most dangerous duties—those were selected from among the soldiers who had served in the West Indies, or on the Rock during a season of epidemic fever. Then houses were placed under the *surveillance* of sentries; next, whole streets were barricadoed; and finally concealment was at an end; the port was closed, the yellow flag was hoisted, the dock became a place of quarantine, and the presence of *the plague* was speedily declared.

Who can speak the horror of that single sentence? Not even those who have partaken the sufferings of a place so visited!—how little then can others comprehend all the fearful contingencies attendant upon that horrible annunciation?

Henceforth the vessels arriving from other ports, warned by the fatal signal, steered wide of the harbour, communicating only distantly with the depôt ships of war lying off the New Mole, under the command of Rear-Admiral Fleming, and then passed away in terror of every breeze that swept across their decks.

Letters to England were forbidden, the Rock paper was circulated jealously, and its details could no longer be relied on—the pro-

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gress of the war had lost its engrossing interest, and upon the single point where all minds concentrated the reports were every way delusive—hopes were held forth that had no foundation—not half the number of cases recorded, and no death that could by possibility be kept concealed. Such was the danger to be apprehended from spreading the alarm, which, in spite of all precautions, acted only too powerfully as a most insidious assistant to the incursions of the disease.

And soon, instead of being a journal of incidental occurrences, the Rock paper became only a vehicle for the transmission of garrison regulations.

Female attendants were no longer to be had in any capacity; washerwomen and nurses abandoned their duties, and could neither be bribed nor threatened into their performance. Delicate hands were dedicated to the most servile and laborious occupations, and each family became a separate community, holding no intercourse with the rest, except such as were passed through the momentary interchange of a few words conveyed by the conductors of the provision-carts, by whom stores were daily deposited in baskets placed at spots appointed for the purpose.

The only circumstances that interrupted the solemn stillness of the place were the transits of such carts, or of others devoted to more mournful duties. The course of that appointed for the conveyance of the sick to the public lazerettos was often marked by the wailings of the dying, or the shrieks of the newly-smitten, who were forcibly torn from their distracted relatives, in all probability to die among hospital hirelings, and to be hurled, without distinction of rank or sex, into those dreadfully capacious pits dug on the neutral ground—to serve as the common receptacle of all persons suspected to have died of the pestilence, in each of which at the least fifty uncoffined bodies were huddled and heaped together.

The separation of infected members from their families was a measure considered essential to stop the course of infection, but it could only be practised where one person in a household suffered: in these cases, however, it was so abhorrent to the feelings of the people generally, that the doctors were continually assailed by the most heart-piercing entreaties to secrete the fact of such cases,—and failing in their prayers, many persons have been known wilfully to incur the infection, so that, by a family quarantine, they might be suffered to remain shut up together in their homes, to the chances of recovery or death.

When the spread of the infection rendered the calamity more general, the removal to lazarettos, except in very peculiar circumstances, became of necessity abandoned. And during this period there was scarcely a family on the Rock, from whose history could not be selected, among the women especially, instances of courage, of beautiful attachment—of enduring constancy, of self-abnegation and intrepidity, that would have adorned the annals of past ages.

Perhaps, of all the circumstances attendant on that awful visitation, none was more terrible than the frightful rapidity with which burial followed death. The necessity of the measure could not be disputed—but the occasional results were truly horrible to reflect upon.

The passages of the death-carts were unintermitting day and night; the solemn rumble might continually be distinguished; and though the conductors did not, as in some places in times of plague, summon the survivors to bring out their dead, the celerity with which they appeared in the chambers of the scarcely breathless,—unceremoniously hustling the beloved departed into a coffin that was destined to bear numbers only to the brink of the grave, from which, except by special favour, it was there to be cast into its nauseous resting-place, were details sufficiently revolting to the feelings of the survivors.

Nor was this unhallowed burial, where no prayers consecrated the repose of the departed, the only circumstance that harrowed the sorrows of the mourners. There was yet a fearful question, which had, in several cases, been but too awfully answered, that paralyzed them with terror then, and formed the subject of painful doubt to many for the remainder of their lives—

Was the buried—DEAD?

The terror of a living burial appears to be indigenous to the human mind—how many record their fears on the face of their last testament! To how many injunctions does that single apprehension give rise! Even death itself loses its hideousness in comparison with the horrible suggestion of recovering sensation and memory in the grave! and *what* a grave was theirs? Who could venture to portray such an awakening? The human mind would break down, and reason itself be frighted from her throne, were we steadily to contemplate the position of a victim restored to consciousness in the midst of such a charnel-pit of vileness and corruption.

WAS THE BURIED *dead?*

Thou wert wise! thou wert good! thou wert loved!
With thy name all my hopes were entwined,
And each day but more tenderly proved
How *my* life in *thy* life was enshrined!

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But the light has gone out from thine eye,
And thine odorous breathings are shed,
And while to awake thee I try,
They rudely exclaim, thou art dead!

Thou wert prized as the one precious gem,
And my heart was the casket for thee!
Yet now I am plundered by them,
And they bear my rich treasure from me;
They wait not for coffin nor shroud,
They heed not the tears that I shed,
But they hustle thee off with the crowd,
And can it be *true* thou art dead?

Thou wert good! yet no requiem nor bell
Denotes the sad passage of worth,
And no shuddering mourner may tell
How they flung thee like filth in the earth?
Death with horrors hath heaped thee around,
Corruption now pillows thy head,
They have piled up that dread cavern's bound,
And now must I *pray* thou art dead!

Couldst thou wake in that pestilent grave
To know where thou'rt left to decay,
To struggle, to battle, to rave,
'Mongst the dead as thou gropest thy way,
Thou wouldst tear out thine heart in affright;
Thy wisdom, thine intellect fled,
Couldst thou creep through that death-slime to light,
Affection would wish thou wert dead!

Thy death, that but now was the theme
Of mine anguish, my tears, my despair,
To such horrors as these doth but seem
A subject for tenderest prayer.
Thou art gone!—thou art risen on high—
To the throne of thy Father thou'rt sped!
Thou'rt above!—wherefore, then, should I sigh?—
Would to God I were *sure* thou wert dead!

That the danger was not merely imaginary was demonstrated by several startling cases, where trance was mistaken for death; and as those persons were but rarely rescued, and the sable attendants were permitted to exercise a discretionary power, there is only too much lamentable cause to fear that in some instances the awakening may have come too late.

One instance of escape was afforded by an officer, who was subsequently one of the greatest ornaments of our dramatic corps—Lieutenant Jordan, of the 26th—who suffered from the epidemic fever in its worst form, and who being by his medical adviser reported 'dying,' was accordingly placed on the list for burial, and the watching of a faithful servant was immediately interrupted by the entrance of the dead-bearers, who insisted upon carrying off what they termed the corpse.

In vain the domestic protested that his master was only in 'a faint.' The doctors had pronounced his condition to be hopeless,—his case was one of those that 'always terminate on the ninth day;' the ninth day had arrived, the lieutenant offered no resistance, and therefore dead they insisted he must be, and buried he should be they were determined.

But determination, though a good thing in itself, is not half so powerful as when backed by attachment. Consequently, after a fruitless war of words, the servant adopted a more *striking* method of argument, and, in despite of a few knock-down hits, had nearly succeeded in ejecting his antagonists, when his fidelity was rewarded by the awakening of his master, whom, to his great joy, he suddenly perceived a silent but deeply-interested spectator of the affray.

A loud 'Hurrah for the master, and long life to him!' closed the contention, and completed the expulsion of the intruders. And the invalid's life *was* spared to rejoice the poor fellow with many proofs of his gratitude, and to become one of the most joyous and popular persons in the coteries of the garrison, among whom he used to relate the particulars of his escape with that inimitable humour which so pre-eminently characterized his amusing narratives.

For a similar rescue Delorme was likewise indebted to the pertinacity of his servant, who, upon a like visit, locked his master's chamber-door, and resolutely refused to find the key. It afterwards proved that the mission of the bearers was to the adjoining quarters. As, however, the captain was at the time suffering from collapse, and too feeble either to speak or move, he would undoubtedly have been carried off by the half-drunken and wholly callous persons whose pressing duties rendered them far from particular in their examinations.

Another and still more awful case was that of the wife of a medical officer, who since that period is reported to have amassed a considerable fortune by means of the very remarkable reputation that he has established for himself.

She was the mother of a large family, nearly all of whom participated in the one calamity; she was guarded with the most solicitous care by the skill of her husband and the affection of her eldest daughter, a girl of unshrinking courage and superior intellect, yet, despite all her most strenuous exertions, she sank under the disease, and her sorrowing husband pronounced her—*dead!*

By extraordinary influence the lapse of

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three hours was granted between death and burial---and the decencies of the grave permitted; the last duties were piously performed for her by her sorrowing relations---she was carefully placed within her coffin, and the mourners were gazing their last, before the final closing of the scene---when the pale form, bursting the ghastly cerements of the tomb, reared itself from its dark sleep, and with fully awakened consciousness, saw and comprehended all. *One* look of horror rested momently on the group that surrounded her, ---*one* fearful shriek rang hollowly through the chamber,---and then the living tenant sank down a fitting occupant of the receptacle that enclosed her.

In vain the fondest caresses were breathed upon the pallid lips---in vain was the chill form hurried to a warm couch, and surrounded by all the comforts that inventive love could suggest---that single moment of affright had for ever chased the returning spirit,and the yawning grave closed over the victim of expediency.

A catastrophe not less affecting, but from a different cause, than the foregoing, was furnished by the fate of a tenderly-attached young couple, who, after an engagement protracted by the scruples of friends and other occurrences, had been only a few months married. The husband was a junior officer on the medical staff, and was known to have set up for himself an antidotal theory, by the rigid observance of which he pretended that all persons might, if they would, escape the infection.

This consisted partly in a course of regimen, but mainly in taking large doses of calomel---a medicine during the attack in such common use, that the doctors were in the habit of carrying their waistcoat pockets filled with pills compounded of it, which they plentifully administered upon the first symptoms of the complaint.

Very early during the season of visitation, Doctor Waters was missed from his appointed rounds, but all communication between districts was so difficult and uncertain, and whether he had received orders of removal, or had falsified his own practice by falling a victim to the disease, could only be conjectured, and few found leisure to inquire beyond the welfare of their own hearth.

The residence of the doctor stood apart, and was surrounded by a walled court, which remained jealously closed; his fate, therefore, was not known until the peregrinations of the fumigatory agents after the departure of the plague revealed, among many other horrible secrets, those which rested in the concealment of his dwelling.

Here the remains of husband and wife were found resting ghastly together; some scattered memoranda, showing that they had both strictly adhered to the doctor's prescriptive system, but that, so far from its acting as a preventive, it had only served to weaken the animal powers, and when they imbibed the infection, rendered the use of those medicines which might have been effective, altogether useless to their debilitated habit.

They had died without seeking help from others, and passed away happily, it is to be hoped, inasmuch as that they were not divided.

Their servant, in whom they appeared to have placed unlimited confidence, was found in the court, also dead; and concealed about his person were all the portable valuables and cash which had belonged to the unfortunate pair: whether he had purloined them for his own use, and was in the act of escaping, when death summoned him to render an account of his stewardship, or that he had thus secreted them in obedience to the wishes of his dying master, who might possibly have delegated to him the task of transmitting the property to his distant friends, was a mystery that will only be known when master and man shall appear before the tribunal of Immortal Justice.

I might, however, swell these very imperfect sketches to a volume, and yet leave unmentioned hundreds of the most touching ravages of the monster fiend who depopulated alike the mansion and the hut; I must, therefore, call back my thoughts at once to the narrative of my legitimate heroine.

(To be continued.)

SONG.

'Och! plôsse Lethe's strow wie sonss.'—Longe.

O Lethe! flowed thy current still, how gladly would my lip,
To drown the memory of the past, thy blessed waters sip;
But ah! no longer flows her stream, and memory has the sway,
And thoughts of all the past arise, and cloud our sunniest day!

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The holy light of heavenly hope finds entrance to the breast,
And, pointing to futurity, smiles all our fears to rest;
But e'en the blessed smile of hope in clouds is sometimes cast,
It cannot pierce the blackening veil—the memory of the past!

It rises in the midnight hour, it veils the light of day;
It clothes the youthful brow with age, it makes the heart its prey;
'Tis the worm that never dieth, living—gnawing to the last
Oh! the curse on Adam's children is the memory of the past!

N. J. Lucas.

HIGH TREASON.

It was the noon of a hot summer's day, and the tide of life was running high and hurriedly through the narrow streets of London, darkened by the overhanging houses that disfigured it in the time of the first James; the bold 'prentices of the good city, in default of the more active amusement of bludgeons and buffets, were lightening the toil of enforced attention to business by jests on the passers-by, and occasionally sharp bandyings of the same among themselves, whereby were laid the foundations of many evening games, productive of black eyes and broken bones. At the same time those who paced the doorways or dark shops of 'the Chepe' were tolerably unanimous on one point, thanks to the appearance of two individuals who were unfortunate enough to draw upon themselves the exercise of the mischievous vivacity for which they were rather remarkable. There certainly was something noticeable and particular in one of these persons—just what might be supposed likely to excite the ridicule of youths accustomed to consider ease of manner, or its more current representative, impudence, as absolutely essential to the formation of a manly character. He was taller and larger than his companion, on whose arm he leaned, or rather dragged heavily, or which he occasionally jerked by a stumble against some passer-by; he was evidently a dweller in wilds remote, a perfect stranger in the metropolis, whose wonders and bustle seemed absolutely to have bewildered him, and his unsophisticated stare was only interrupted by the bashful withdrawal of his eyes when it was returned. Yet puzzled and stupid as the countenance now looked, the open brow and well-formed mouth seemed competent to express better things, and his limbs, spite of the unaccustomed air with which he wore a new and fashionable suit of clothes, were well-formed. The fault of bashfulness, or the virtue of modesty, could not certainly be attributed to his companion; his walk was a stiff conceited strut, and his countenance was adorned with an air of assurance that was its only though doubtful recommendation; his dress was rather shabby, and worn with a carelessness that seemed to aspire to the pretensions of the aristocrat and the privileges of the leveller. He was evidently much annoyed by the species of attention they excited, for which he entirely blamed his companion, and hurried him along with an oath and an exhortation to look before him, that increased the perturbation under which he laboured. 'It is an ill wind that blows no one good;' so thought a portly looking personage, who, with his hands crossed at his back, was standing at the door of a tavern they were approaching, and whose smile of sympathy with the merry humour of the 'prentices, was checked into one of complaisance as its object drew near.

'A fair day, gentles,' he said, 'but methinks rather warm for walking—step in, and try if a rump-steak and a tankard of ale will not suit the time better.'

'Um,' said the smaller of the two to whom this was addressed, looking up and down the street; 'no man of fashion in sight. I believe, friend, I must peril my reputation for the advantages you promise, provided you engage never to name the fact.'

'O no, sir,' returned the landlord, with a half grin; 'I won't tell my lord chief justice, though he should send to ask me. Pray step in.'

And he escorted them into a large room, where a number of grave, respectable-looking citizens were engaged in discussing a solid and steaming meal, who were indeed too earnestly occupied to have noticed the newcomers, if the one, hitherto the speaker, had not started back with a loud oath, and asked the landlord how he could think of introducing a gentleman into such company. Two or three mutterings, and a general smile of contempt, hailed the remark from the dinner-table, and the countryman in a confused whisper urged his companion to sit down quietly—they should do very well, but this would not suit the other; it was an opportunity to show his consequence that could not be neglected; he peremptorily insisted on a pri-

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vate room, to which the landlord, premising that they must pay handsomely for it, agreed to conduct them. He, however, modified the promise as he went, by the observation that two gentlemen were already taking their wine there.

'But you can be as snug and solitary as on Hampstead Heath,' he went on; 'for they are too busy talking either to see or hear you, I'll engage.'

The spokesman entered the room very much with the air of one who thought it impossible *he* should be disregarded in any case. It was an up-stairs back room, low and long, and garnished with two small casemented windows, consisting of dull small panes of glass, which overlooked a narrow yard backed by a high wall. At the farther end of this apartment, at a table on which stood two nearly empty bottles, as many drinking cups, and some hard cakes, sat two men, whom a tailor would have designated low fellows, and a philosopher regarded with curiosity, if not with interest—that is, they were shabbily dressed men of nature's nobility; some sheets of paper and pens and ink lay between them; they were not now, as the host had supposed, engaged in conversation; they sat, each with his head leaning on his hand, and silent, but so deep in thought, that neither lifted his eyes on the entrance of the new guests, who placed themselves at a table at the other end of the room, the countryman emitting a sigh of relief as he leaned back on his seat, and his companion, in a tone of importance, ordering a chicken and canary wine, which order, with an appropriate bow, the host withdrew to execute.

'Well, Barnes,' continued the town-bred gallant, cocking his hat over his left eyebrow, 'what think you of our poor town? Is it equal to Belton? Come, let us hear what you think of it.'

'Why, truly, cousin Bradlaw,' replied the countryman, in a clear voice, but provincial accent, 'I yet hardly know; if I could see it when there was not such a confounded bustle and confusion in the streets, I should know more about it. One ought to be here in harvest time, when the men, women, and children have something else to do than run gadding through the streets.'

His companion laughed. 'Their harvest is every day in the year, and is frequently gathered in the streets,' he said.

The countryman shook his head, as inclined to think he was hoaxed, but did not pursue the subject. 'It is time my cause was pushed, cousin,' he remarked; 'I shall be wanted at home in a few days—there's the sheep-shearing and the wake. I should like to get the business finished to-day.'

'Matters at court are not so easily finished,' replied Bradlaw; 'but we will see about it. By-the-bye, you must give me some more money; the exorbitant rascal I saw yesterday took all you gave me the day before, and there are two or three more to be won yet—you must not spare if you would get on at court.'

'It's dear work,' said Barnes, sighing. 'I don't know what Jane will say to it; there's a hundred marks gone already, and nothing to see for it; I don't know whether the farm will pay for it, though it *is* good land, and lies so convenient.'

'Well, we'll talk of it after dinner,' interrupted Bradlaw, 'for here comes mine host with the chicken.'

For several minutes both were fully employed in satisfying the demands of hunger and thirst, and too earnestly devoted to the task to mingle conversation with it. In the mean time, the other party broke the long and thoughtful silence in which they had hitherto been immersed. At first they spoke in a low tone and short sentences, but gradually their voices rose, and their manner became more energetic, till a few words uttered by one of them startled those at the other table, and aroused their anxious attention. The words were rather extraordinary, and naturally startling to a peaceable and loyal subject; they were these:—

'The king must be killed—that you agree.'

'O, certainly,' replied his companion, 'there cannot be two opinions on that subject.'

The countryman stared with horror and astonishment, and his cousin, with a tragical and important look, signed to him to keep silence. The conversation at the other table continued—

'You see,' went on the last speaker, 'he has done all the mischief it is necessary he should do, so we may consign him to the Styx.'

'Yes, yes,' answered the other hastily; 'but the question is, how and where? For my part, I think poison would do best, it gives such an opportunity for the expression of pain, repentance, and patriotic speeches.'

The other shook his head.

'I don't know,' he said; 'the dagger is more heroic; and then, you know, he need not die directly, and you have all the opportunity you want for those.'

'I should like to strike out some new plan,' observed his friend; 'fire—water—gunpowder,' he enumerated thoughtfully;—'just let your mind run over every possible mode of death; I should like to have one unhackneyed, if I could,'—and both were again silent a

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few minutes, an interval which was filled up at the other table with a pantomimic display of horror and curiosity.

'He might be thankful, you know,' resumed one of the conspirators, 'that his son was spared—that might have a good effect. Suppose the deed were done when he was holding a council?'

'But then,' returned the other, 'comes back the question of the mode of death—I prefer poison.'

'Good God, how horrible!' groaned the countryman in a subdued tone.

His companion motioned him to silence, as one of the other party looked round at the sound of his voice, but carelessly resumed the subject, as if nothing fearing.

'Well, let us decide quickly, for it must be done to-day,' said the advocate of poison. 'Here, you take pen and paper, and write your notions on the subject; I will do the same, and then we can compare them—but first a cup of wine, for plotting is dry work.'

The other assented, each swallowed a tolerable draught, poured from the bottle beside him, and, taking up their pens, wrote slowly and thoughtfully.

The countryman's eyes were fixed upon his companion with questioning wonder as to how they should act in these dreadful circumstances. Bradlaw compressed his lips, and looked significantly important; at last, beckoning his friend to approach his ear to his mouth, he whispered, as lightly as he could,

'Be sure don't let them escape while I am away,' and, nodding mysteriously, he crept quietly towards the door, which he opened as gently as possible, and, pulling it to after him, descended the stairs two or three at a time.

Meantime, Barnes was gradually recovering his faculties, and placed, as he imagined, in a dangerous position, his courage and determination rose to meet it.

'They are horrid wicked chaps, that's certain,' he said to himself; 'but somehow I don't like taking 'em, as it were, in a net—killing a fox in his hole; at least I'll warn 'em what we're going to do, and they can stand at bay—bad as they are, it's not English not to give 'em fair play.'

The conspirators were still occupied with their pens, whose intermittent scratching was the only sound heard in the apartment. Barnes had taken his determination;—he rose, and walking steadily up to the table where they sat, hemmed loudly to attract their attention, but it was too entirely fixed upon their employment.

'Gentlemen,' he said, finding this vain;—one of them—the one who had expressed his preference of poison—looked up.

'Well, my friend, what do you want?' he said, with an impatient gesture; 'you interrupt an important consultation.'

'Gentlemen,' repeated the countryman, 'I and my friend have heard all you have been saying the last half hour. I thought it but fair to let you know, that you might be prepared.'

'Why,' said the proposer of the more heroic death, with a smile, 'you are not going to compound a rival plot, are you?'

'Nay if he is, we must take care of ourselves,' added the other gaily, 'and kill in some new way, if we shoe a troop of horse with felt, as Willy says.'

'God forbid!' replied the countryman, surprised at the lightness with which they treated a discovery so dangerous to their safety—'God forbid that I should have hand or heel in such plots. I'd scorn to attack a man, if he was only a man, without giving him a chance of defending himself—but a king!—don't you know that, whatever chance you give him, if you kill a king, even if you escape hanging, you'll certainly be damned.'

'I don't know,' observed one of his hearers, with a slight smile; 'if it was not done so often without danger of either, our trouble now might have been less—but, my friend, it is no business of yours.'

'Yes, it is,' replied the countryman energetically, 'and so you shall find it, I warn you, cousin—and I will spoil your plots for you!'

'You will?' ejaculated the advocate of poison, leaning back in his chair, and regarding this strange intruder with a stare of astonishment that gradually gave way to a laugh that to the horrified Barnes sounded satanic, and which, accompanied by a glance at his friend, was answered by his equally obstreperous merriment. They were both almost exhausted with their laughter, and were wiping away its accompanying tears, while Barnes looked on with a fear that they were suddenly gone mad, when Bradlaw returned, accompanied by the whole tavern establishment, and several of the remaining guests of the ordinary, who were anxious to prove their loyalty, and to see the dreadful conspirators; last came the landlord, panting and groaning.

'O Lord,' he cried, 'that my house—an honest tavern for twenty years—should come to this at last—to be the nest to hatch treason in—take care of the windows. O dear, O dear, the sacrilegious rascals! and it's the King's Arms too!'

Meantime, taking care to be well supported by his companions, Bradlaw approached the table of the still merry conspirators, crying authoritatively, 'Yield, gentlemen, in the king's name. I arrest you for high treason.'

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'Nonsense,' said one of the accused with a smile, struggling with a sense of annoyance; 'don't be a fool, my friend; we were but contriving the plot of a tragedy. My name is Fletcher; some of you know me, I dare say,' he added, looking round upon the posse of loyal zealots. His supposition was, for himself, unfortunately right. 'Ha, Ben,' he continued, as he met a merry eye amongst them, 'you can tell them we are honest men, and faithful subjects of the king.'

'Sorry I can't say that much, Master Fletcher,' replied Ben, looking as grave as he could; 'Willy says you are rather addicted to stealing, and I know you to have had a hand in many plots and conspiracies.'

Fletcher tossed his head with a smile and a frown.

'Come Ben,' he said, 'it's no time for a joke; tell these asses what a blunder they're making.'

'Master Fletcher,' replied Ben, conscientiously placing his hand on his breast, 'it goes against my conscience to give any other evidence than that I have already given to this honourable company—I hope you may get your deserts.'

'Come, come,' resumed Bradlaw, 'the case is plain enough, and his majesty's sacred self shall hear of it—and here is additional evidence,' he continued, as he pounced upon the papers on which the confederates had been writing.

'Read them, read them,' was the general cry.

'Excuse me, gentlemen,' said the invoked with elaborate dignity, while Fletcher, spite of his disagreeable position, regarded him with a comic smile—'I am somewhat too well born to enact the secretary to such a company'—par parenthèse, he could not read writing;—'mine host,' he went on, 'is the proper person to read them;—as master of the house, he is the chief person in this business.'

'God forbid!' cried the landlord, retreating from the front ranks, whither his curiosity had led him—'I never could be taught to read, and, besides, who knows but it may be a spell to raise the devil?'

The holder of the manuscript treason looked at it doubtfully, and held it more slightly. 'Here, Barnes,' he said, holding it towards his country friend, 'you read it.'

'Faith I would not care if it was a spell to raise all the devils with,' was the reply, 'but I never could read written hand. But we want no more evidence; I'll swear, before any justice in the land, I heard them contriving to kill the king, and that would be treason at Belton, whatever it may be here.'

'I'll read it, master,' said the man called Ben, stepping forward with earnest gravity. 'I've a piece of witch-elm in my pocket to guard his satanic majesty's own treasury—an empty purse—give it me, and I'll read it. Hem!' he commenced, loudly clearing his throat as he received it.—'To all whom it may concern—that is not here, gentlemen, but it's a good beginning for a legal instrument—'to all whom it may concern,' he resumed, 'this is to give notice—'The prince, irritated at his father's harshness and severity, and urged by ambition, forms a plot against the life of the king—the father and son are quarrelling when the conspirators enter—the prince pronounces the words that were to be the signal—they commence the attack—the king, believing the life of his son equally their object, throws himself before him, and receives his death-wound—his daughter enters horrified, &c., but the father's last words signify that he perceives his son's guilt—the prince, in the agonies of shame and remorse, defies to combat the conspirator, and the princess"—That's all,' said Ben, abruptly looking round on his open-mouthed auditory; 'but could anything be worse? Here's the king and prince expected to quarrel—flat blasphemy!—here's a gentleman proposing to fight in a lady's presence—deliberate heresy!—and the king, his most sacred and peaceable majesty, God bless him! hacking away like a common soldier—downright sedition? How say you, gentlemen—guilty or not guilty?'

Fletcher had been watching, with an amused smile, the annoyed expression of his friend's face, as his crude plans were thus read and commented on, and the smile increased to a laugh as his companion started up, and in tones that almost overpowered the unanimous shout that followed the appeal, cried, with an oath,

'You consummate fools, can't you see you are hoaxed?—can't you distinguish between the plot of a tragedy and high treason?'

'Friend,' retorted Bradlaw, conceitedly, 'it would better become you to treat loyal men with more respect; we are rather sharper than you take us for. Barnes, seize and pinion him—and you,' he added, addressing Fletcher, 'come quietly with us, and it may be best for you. Seize him, friends,' he continued, darting back among his companions as Fletcher rose from his seat; but he soon found it was with no violent intentions, and the general retreat was followed by a general rush, as his peaceable design became apparent.

'Well, gentlemen,' said the accused conspirator, trying to look grave, 'if it must be so, it must—where do you intend to take us?'

'Even into the king's own most sacred presence,' said Bradlaw importantly.

'Have a care, my masters,' said the host,

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shaking his head doubtfully—'I don't think his majesty would thank you for taking such desperate-minded villains into his presence—he has a peaceable and godly horror of men of violence; better take them to the duke—he is quick-witted, and zealous for his majesty's safety, as is becoming in a nobleman and faithful servant—take them to the duke.'

This opinion was acted upon, and Fletcher, by a whisper, having induced his friend to submit, the two conspirators were secured as well as conveniences would permit, and, attended by several of the company who were anxious to see the issue, and escorted by the two cousins, they were carried to the water-side, intending to take boat there for Greenwich, where the king and court then were.

Let us follow the course of the story to a shaded hollow in Greenwich Park, where was assembled a large and motley-looking party. It was one of the whims of Buckingham, who generally led the amusements of the court, to perform, with a company made up of some of the noblemen and gentlemen composing it, a play which he had himself written for the purpose. This morning had been appointed for a rehearsal, and the place just named fixed on as the scene. Buckingham was enacting, to the life, the careless lover to the princess of the piece, and, in answer to one of the lady's most elaborate and expostulatory speeches, was observing that—

'Nor sun, nor moon, nor stars are always shining,
And Love, not less celestial, changes too.'

He had 'crossed over,' as the stage directions recommended, after this, when, from the path towards which he had advanced, a keeper suddenly emerged, who, taking off his hat, stood in an attitude that requested his attention.

'Well,' exclaimed the theatrical hero, with an oath, 'thy wonder come discuss—the clouds in thy countenance must needs fall by pailfuls.'

'My lord,' said the keeper, with a grave importance, who had been retained counsel by the proper fee, 'here is a body of grave and respectable citizens, who have brought two men whom they accuse of high treason, and they petition to submit the matter to your grace, whose talents and penetration they are aware of.'

'Get thee gone for a saucy flatterer,' said Buckingham. 'But stay;—bring them all hither, traitors and accusers together, it will make an excellent interlude. Go and bring them quick—and hark ye, tell them the king himself will hear them.'

The keeper bowed, and disappeared.

'A hall! a hall!' said the duke, as he turned toward the company.

The princess of the scene started—she did not remember those words in the play—and the rest of the assemblage looked expectant of some new whim.

'My lords and ladies,' continued Buckingham gravely, 'my last speech was prophetic—I am changed. I was a lover—I am now a judge—a total and startling change. A hall! a hall! for the trial of one accused of high treason!'

The surprise of his hearers was increased, and one or two did not look quite at their ease. The duke led the heroine of the play politely to her seat, and then arranging his dress to as grave an appearance as it was capable of, he issued a command to that effect to the rest, and in a few minutes was formed a mimic court of justice.

'And now,' said Buckingham, as he seated himself on a high bank which was intended to represent the woolsack, 'Heaven send that his most gracious Majesty's paternal lecture may outlast this grave and important trial. Heaven forbid that high treason, though but in the egg, should approach his presence.'

'Here is a court, truly, my lord,' observed a lady of the party, 'but where is the criminal?'

'Madam,' said Buckingham, glancing his eyes maliciously towards his less-pleased hearers, 'they are not far off. O, here they are,' he continued, as the keeper approached escorting plaintiffs and defendants. 'There should be a flourish of trumpets,' he went on; 'but a cackle saved Rome, and we may be satisfied with a goose as herald. Which are the accusers, and which the accused?' he observed, changing his high tone and manner to one more consistent with his character as judge.

Bradlaw advanced before the rest, and bending his knee before the supposed king, in no wise abashed by his presence, proceeded, in terms of inflated loyalty, to declare the horror with which he brought before his majesty such desperate villains, whose well-authenticated guilt he proceeded to rehearse. He was surprised, as he concluded to see the monarch so awfully threatened absolutely struggling with a convulsive attempt not to laugh, and on looking round to his prisoners to perceive that they were indulging an equally merry mood; he looked round to his chief supporter Ben, but his eye had caught the infection—he looked again at the supposed king, who by a violent effort had by this time recovered his gravity.

'Let us see the paper you have named, as containing the outline of the plot,' said the judge.

Bradlaw advanced to present it; the monarch held it before his face to read, but the movement of his shoulders expressed some strong convulsion that looked decidedly like

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mirth. As soon as he had finished reading the papers, he raised his head with an exaggerated frown that was intended to mask a more merry expression.

'Let the prisoners be brought near,' he said. 'How now, you rascals?' he continued, addressing Fletcher, 'have you nothing better to do than to form such villanous plots?'

'Please your grace,' said Fletcher, with a demure smile, 'a rival plotter is no fair judge. I contend that "the plot is a good plot—an excellent plot,"—meaning mine of course.'

'What, to kill the king in a vulgar brawl, or despatch him with poison, like a rat in a hole? Are these the best plots you could form? Why, I think I could have contrived a better myself.'

'With submission to your grace's judgment,' said Fletcher, curbing a smile, 'you will relish the last plan more when it is performed, as I design it in a few days.'

The coolness with which the accused met the charge, and the manner in which the monarch had received intimation of it, had actually stunned Bradlaw into silence, from which this last daring threat, as he conceived it, aroused without enlightening him, and, anxious to show his zeal, he called upon Barnes to assist him in removing the bold and dangerous traitor from the presence of his Majesty. Barnes had seemed utterly confounded, both sense and senses, by the impressive presence in which he found himself, his cheek burning as if the bright eyes around him had been so many sunglasses, all directed upon it. He caught nothing of the meaning of the scene, or its ridicule; nothing was present to his ear but a general buz, nothing to his sight but eyes whose number outstarred the firmament, all looking at him. At length it occurred to him, as a last and desperate resource, that he would steal away the very first opportunity, and with this determination he took heart, and looked carefully round, but with a glance that had a strong tendency to earth. He thus became sensible of the laugh that pervaded the assembly, which, of course, he took to be levelled against himself, and which strengthened his resolve to escape. It was at this moment that the sound of his name, as uttered by his cousin, struck on his ear; the impetus was quite contrary to the intention. Barnes only thereby perceived that there was a chance of his being brought into a more conspicuous position, and he straightway turned about to flee. Buckingham perceived his design, and, curious to know its motive, called to a gentleman who had just joined the party, 'Stop him, Vivani, stop him!' The gentleman obeyed by stretching out his arms to impede his further progress, and then grasping his shoulder, the countryman's spirit rose with the perception of physical opposition, and his ear had caught the name by which his retainer was addressed—it was that of the very man to whom his cousin had, as he had informed him, given the hundred marks the day before. A moment he struggled silently; at length, finding that his strength was no match for his opponent's supple but clinging hold, he cried in desperation, 'For God's sake, let me go, if not for the money I sent you yesterday, at least for the hundred marks I'll give you to-morrow.' But the person he addressed, supposing him mad, only tightened his hold.

'Bring him here, Vivani,' cried Buckingham.

'You ungrateful scoundrel!' exclaimed Barnes, passionately but vainly struggling with Vivani's attempt to obey. 'Is this all a hundred marks will buy at court?' and by the time he had, by the help of some assiduous standers-by, been dragged before Buckingham, indignation had utterly overcome bashfulness, and he met the duke's look of smiling surprise with a flashing eye and a bold brow.

'Why, man, did you attempt to escape?' questioned Buckingham.

'Why does this fellow hold me? The ungrateful rascal!' cried the exasperated countryman. 'I sent him a hundred marks yesterday, and now I only asked him to let me go.'

'For what did you send him so large a sum?' asked the duke, glancing suspiciously from one to the other.

'The man is mad,' said Vivani. 'I know nothing of him, his money, or his concerns.'

Barnes's surprise for the moment mastered his indignation, and he was silent.

'For what, I ask, did you send him so large a sum?' repeated the duke, to whom the countryman's manner was proof of his sincerity.

'Why, your majesty,' he said at length, 'I always heard, saving your majesty's presence, that there was little truth to be found at court—and that's true, any how. I wanted to get a lease of the Heathside farm; the Duke of Buckingham is the landlord, and I sent his steward—this man here—a hundred marks, that he might speak a good word for me.'

The amazed look of the accused recipient in his turn vouched his truth.

'By whom did you send it?' asked the duke.

Barnes immediately pointed out his cousin, who on the first mention of the affair had shrunk out of sight, and would have escaped if he could.

'Ho, ho!' said Buckingham; 'here is another plot though in rather a different style.

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Bring him forward,' he continued; and Bradlaw, frightened even out of his assurance, was brought pale and trembling before his judge.

'So, Mr. Traitor-catcher,' said the duke, 'you hear the charge against you. What have you done with the hundred marks this man gave you?' he added abruptly.

'Please your majesty'——said Bradlaw.

'Nonsense, man,' interrupted the duke impatiently; 'I am no majesty, only the Duke of Buckingham—what have you done with this money?'

'O please your majesty—your grace I mean,' said Bradlaw, throwing himself on his knees, 'forgive me, and I'll tell you all. I have the money in my pocket,' he continued, hastened in his confession by the duke's frown.

'Hold, man, let him alone,' said Buckingham, as Barnes approached his cousin threateningly on hearing this. 'Restore it this instant,' he went on, addressing Bradlaw, 'and thank the presence of these ladies that I do not have you soundly cuffed for making so free with my household in your reports.'

Bradlaw hastily drew from his pocket a heavy purse, and placed it in his cousin's extended hand. Buckingham watched the proceeding with interest, and as the countryman, with blunt thanks to him for espousing his cause, was pocketing it, he said, 'So, my friend, you had intended this sum for the purchase of my steward—you shall have his master at the same price; come, give me the hundred marks, and the lease is yours.' Barnes stared but obeyed. 'And in future,' continued the judge, 'when you have a cause in hand bring the arguments to me,' and he shook the purse; 'and as to the matter of these traitors, I say, let them kill the king in the same manner as often as they please, and I will answer for the royal approbation, if they first take my opinion as to the time—and now let us finish the Careless Lover.'

M. J. R.

SONG OF HOPE.

BY MRS. ABDY.

THERE is a hope, a radiant hope, that warms the heart of youth,
Bidding it deem this vale of tears a paradise of truth,
It tells of firm devoted love that knows not how to change,
Of faithful and enduring friends who grow not cold and strange,
Of sunny days and starry nights on life's untroubled sea—
Such was the first delusive hope that cast a spell o'er me.

There is a hope more dazzling still, that glads our riper years,
With stirring busy images the eager mind it cheers;
It tells of scenes of courtly state, and sounds of silvery praise,
The coronal of flashing gems, the wreath of envied bays;
Amid earth's great and gifted ones it bids us proudly be—
Such was the second cheating hope that cast a spell o'er me!

There is a hope divine and pure, a hope that never dies,
It dwells upon a glorious land beyond the vaulted skies;
It bids us lift our chastened thoughts earth's vanities above,
It aids us to support the loss of human faith and love;
It tells us of a future life with spirits blest and free—
Such is my last best hope, O Lord—a hope that rests on Thee.

DOUBLE JEALOUSY.

BY MRS. LEIGH CLIFFE.

MATRIMONY has been compared to all manner of odd things; and as, in the case of love, two people are seldom of the same opinion on the subject, we will, for the edification of the 'gentle reader,' give an outline of the wedded life of an old friend, whose name has before appeared in this, the cynosure of miscellanies.

It was on one of those delightful autumn evenings when the sun, tired of his garish brilliancy, rests with milder refulgence on the dark leaves of the forest trees, plays gently over the purple-fruited vines, and tinges the distant clouds with that glorious light, which even the gifted pencil of a Claude could poorly imitate, that a group were collected beneath and around the flower-trellised porch

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of the more than commonly comfortable residence of a small landed proprietor in the province of Normandy. Happy faces were there; and the joyous laugh of three children, who were gambolling in the buoyancy of health and youth, awakened the far distant echo with the reverberations of their merriment. It was with a mingled feeling of pride and pleasure that the group, which were seated within the porch, watched the sportive gambols of their more infantine companions; and, ever and anon, expressions of delight escaped their lips, as they bounded like young fawns at play, past the spot where they were resting. What can be more interesting to the sobered mind—the reflective period that intervenes between maturity and middle age—than to view and comment upon the growth of intellect and strength in those that are to fill up the vacant places in society—the 'void that Nature in her wisdom asks'—when we rest in peace with our forefathers? If the bosom has a gem, that is it.

But we have as yet not given life to our personages; and in defiance of the opinion of Shakspeare, who tells us there is nothing in a name, we must inform the reader that the persons who were enjoying the cool breezes of evening in the locale we have been describing, were our old and particular friend, the wooden-legged sergeant, his fair wife, Suzette, and Madame Niquet, who was now a buxom widow, and domesticated with her cousins. The younger portion of the party were the olive branches that graced the wedded life of the sergeant and Suzette, who were living examples of the fallacy of the proverb that tells us hasty marriages are productive of protracted repentance. Her very glance spoke of the satisfaction of her heart; and although a few white hairs were sprinkled like a slight shower of sleet upon the dark locks that fell over the weather-beaten brows of the sergeant, there was a healthiness of joy beaming in his eye, that spoke of his contentedness with his lot in life. He was one of those spirits that never meet troubles with complimentary repinings; he took the world, as he did his wife, for better, for worse. If all men would do the same, they would be happier than they generally are: but men are strange animals—though, to say the truth, they are far better than they have been depicted by angry and disappointed women. Men are what women make them; the puppets that act when they are pulled by a string; and that string is *woman's will.* It is too true that few know how to pull the cord with judgment; and from that incaution arises half the disquietudes of matrimonial existence. Suzette had acted on the wiser plan: she had soothed her husband in the moments of irritation; and by her blandishments, when he was joyous, made him forget that the wayward pettishness of nature had ever caused a frown to rest upon his brow.

'We shall have been married ten years to-morrow, my own Suzette,' said the sergeant, as he gently pressed her still fair cheek to his own, 'and many have been the changes we have seen around us in the time. The aged have fallen, and the young have flown; the only thing that appears unchanged and unchangeable, is the strength of our love.'

'Yet,' replied Suzette, 'this day ten years nothing could equal my horror and hatred of you. I little thought, at that moment, happiness would ever have a reaction, and come back to a heart that was then on the point of breaking from the influence of a delusion. There must be a witchcraft in love; for, like moonshine, it shadows forth such fanciful forms, that we sometimes start as we glance at them; and then laugh at our folly, for not having seen clearly through the vapour that surrounded us. But even during the moonshine of first, foolish, girlish love, the heart hath an avenue always open to tenderness and affection. At the most perilous moment of my life, I was taught the economy of the heart; and you know best, Mercier, whether I have not stored up its kindliest feelings for you.'

'They bloomed in their season, dearest,' said the sergeant, 'and escaped the blight with which they were momentarily threatened.'

'For my part, I never believed in the invisibility of love, until I saw it illustrated by the example before me,' said Madame Niquet, with something like an air of sarcasm. 'I certainly was very fond of my poor dear departed husband, and have worn the horrible costume of a widow for two full years, although I must confess that I wish the first inventress of these odious specimens of female head-gear had been sacrificed in the dungeons of the Inquisition. But no woman ever could have fancied such a frightful appendage to the sorrows of a woman. It must have been a *man;* some spiteful old creature, who wished to make his wife look as ugly as himself. I always had a fear of widowhood; and that was the reason why I dreaded poor Niquet's dying. Every time he had the gout, I am sure I suffered a martyrdom, and felt ten times worse than he ever did when the March winds brought on the rheumatism; and, when, at the latter end of his existence, he used, poor man, (I could cry my eyes out when I think of it,) to be half strangled with the asthma, I never could sleep at night without dreaming of bombazin and crape.'

The 'tear had ceased to fall' with Madame

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Niquet for a *cold* husband, and the sergeant began to suspect that she knew somewhat more of the invisibility of love, than she thought it proper or prudent to avow. It was evident that she was a pupil of the modern school of philosophy, and was averse to let useless sighs and tears disturb the serenity of her repose; and but that her condition in life required the observance of the accustomed ceremonials, he began to question whether his poor cousin, Mercier, might not have rested with his ancestors, and have been speedily forgotten. Madame Niquet, to do her justice, had been very particular in observing the quarantine of seclusion for the prescribed time, and had not given anything like open encouragement to the many aspirants to a place in her affections, but it was evident that there was something more on the tapis than was publicly acknowledged.

Discoveries of importance are generally made by accident; and, at the present moment, it was not very difficult to perceive that Madame Niquet was not inclined to be a party involved in solving the mystery. Day by day, however, she appeared to throw off the mask of sorrow; and it was not until she came bounding, like a school-girl, some few days after the commencement of our tale, into the apartment of Suzette and the sergeant, that any clue could be obtained towards the elucidation of her tactics d'amour. She had now cast off the last slight semblance of her widowed state, and with more than her usual elasticity of spirits, announced the arrival of Captain Philippe Survilliers at the chateau. The sergeant received the intelligence with a prolonged whistle, which intimated anything but true satisfaction at the information thus unexpectedly communicated; Suzette looked rather foolish, and Madame Niquet assumed that kind of air which seems to say, there is something more in the wind than you have yet dreamed of.

'And if the captain has come back to the chateau, I do not see, cousin Niquet, what consequence it can be to you or me. You have grown older, and I hope he has grown wiser than he was ten years ago.'

Madame Niquet elevated her head rather proudly, and looked at the sergeant as spitefully as if he was an offender that a glance could wither. She condescended only to exclaim 'Umph!' and was making a hasty exit, when a loud burst of laughter from the sergeant caused her to turn round, and lay aside her momentary dignity.

'Do not be angry, cousin Niquet, at my reminding you that you have turned over a few pages of the annuals. Why, look round at my three little illustrations; they are the finest helps to a man's memory, and frequently prevent him from doing foolish things.'

'And pray what foolish thing have I done?' cried Madame Niquet, with some slight degree of asperity.

'The foolish thing you are *doing*, is believing that Philippe Survilliers is a slave to your charms, without having a single reason to base your vanity on. Truly, widows have odd fancies.'

'I may have *my* reasons for thinking as I please, and what I please, without consulting you, I suppose, cousin Mercier; and if the captain should recollect, now that he has returned, that since my poor dear husband died he has written me certain very pretty billets, I presume my good cousin Mercier will not object to a union between the families.'

'But I should, at present, have very strong objections, insurmountable objections, Madame Niquet; and it would not be very pleasant to my fair cousin to marry a man with a wife, who is not likely to die off at a moment's notice to quit, even to please the heiress presumptive to her husband's hand. Captain Survilliers *is married*, madame!'

'Married! impossible!'

'Then the impossibility is of some years standing,' replied the sergeant; 'but you seem always to be in a dream, Madame Niquet, forming a world of your own, and peopling it with imaginary beings, that, like the fairies, only make their appearance to true believers in the ideal.'

Whatever might be the private opinion of Madame Niquet on the subject of the temporary altercation that had taken place between her and her cousin, she nevertheless did not think proper to give it utterance. Suzette had remained silent: probably she might have felt something like jealousy at the preference given by Philippe to her cousin; or it might have been that she was fearful that some awkward reminiscences might be awakened in the mind of the sergeant by the notification of the arrival of her old suitor at the Chateau de Survilliers.

The veteran was evidently somewhat annoyed at the presence of his former rival in the immediate neighbourhood of his residence. He was in one of those odd humours in which men who really love their wives sometimes indulge, and scarcely knew whether he ought to suspect Suzette of encouraging his return, for it was unannounced, and therefore unexpected; or whether the love of play, in which Philippe was known to participate, had caused him to make a precipitate retreat from Paris. Ideas floated across his imagination that were by no means pleasant; and the slight confusion which Suzette

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had evinced on the first announcement of Philippe's return, fed the embers of jealousy, which only wanted a breath of wind to fan them into a flame. Jealousy, like love, seems to be the 'Will o' the Wisp' of the mind; and is productive of more evils in domestic life, than all the other passions that are mixed up in the composition of human nature: and Suzette began to fear, although she had been silent, that her husband might consider her eyes had given expression to feelings that with her had died a natural death; feelings that shone with a rainbow-beam over a little moment of her existence, and faded away into nothingness as speedily as they had been born.

The return of Philip was not hailed with much demonstration of joy by the villagers; he had been long absent, and little benefit was anticipated from his return. When self has to do with public affairs, the profit is always calculated previous to the display of sentiment; therefore, as the expectations were on a limited scale, the rejoicings were modified by a prudent reserve. Besides, he was married; and married men sometimes lose *caste*, though that is not always the case in France; nor, as certain volumes attest, in countries somewhat nearer home. But although Philippe was married, he was not a whit reformed. The dew-drop that clings to the petals of a rose, exists not on a tenure more fragile than the promises of amendment made by a man that can be led on by every shadow of pleasure. The same laxity of morals, the same disregard of principle that marked the progress of his youth, still distinguished his character; and not even the possession of a wife, whose amiable qualities might have put the unamiable propensities of his nature to shame, could induce him to cast off the principles he had, unfortunately for himself, imbibed in his youth. They clung to him with a tenacity that defied expulsion. One of the brightest passages that we meet with in looking over the backward pages of life, is the record that is traced by memory of kind or noble acts performed by ourselves towards any of our fellow-creatures. Philippe had but few of these reminiscences; and, therefore, the past was ever to him as a sealed book, to which he was seldom desirous of referring.

Philippe was not slow in making advances towards a renewal of friendship with Sergeant Mercier, who, although he would have preferred that distance had still divided them, could not refuse to be on amicable terms. To say truth, the sergeant began to feel a little uneasy at his frequent visits to the cottage; and though he tried to persuade himself that it was only for the purpose of indulging in a flirtation with Madame Niquet, he fancied he had observed him once or twice look somewhat too significantly at Suzette; and, like many silly men who let their fancies run riot against reason, he was not content to keep his thoughts to himself, but in a foolish moment thought proper to make Suzette his confidante, who, not being the best pleased at being suspected, without having given him cause of offence, complained most bitterly to Madame Niquet of the cruelty and injustice of her husband. As the latter lady had not forgotten the sergeant for reminding her of the approach of those disagreeable little appendages to ladies that follow the steps of time, and are known by the familiar term of crows'-feet, she entered fully into the details of Suzette's disquietude, and with some slight degree of jealousy that Philippe should have glanced at any other person than herself, promised that she would do the best in her power to make her cousin Mercier own that he was the veriest *Ane du Village*. Females should not betray the secrets of their sex; but let it be universally known, that when a woman is resolved to make a man look like a fool, she succeeds in nine instances out of ten; and it is very extraordinary that men generally appear anxious to place themselves in very equivocal situations. Accident or design favours the female speculator; while the male one, heaven help him! considers her to be the *beau ideal* of innocence and simplicity.

It was not long before Philippe Survilliers put himself in a position that led on to consequences which he had not taken into his calculation. Tactician as he was in the mysteries of the heart, he had, in this instance, miscalculated his resources.

The shadows of evening were gradually closing over the last beams of day; the sergeant was occupied in attending to the affairs of his little farm, while Suzette was enjoying the freshness of the breeze on the lawn before the cottage, and carolling one of those sweet little *chansons* that are peculiar to the peasantry of Normandy, as she rested herself, after the fashion of her countrywomen, on two chairs, when her quietude was suddenly broken in upon by the appearance of Captain Survilliers.

Suzette started up in alarm, half suppressing a shriek, with which, at the first moment of her surprise, she was about to summon her husband to her assistance, while Philippe imploringly entreated her to be silent, and at least to listen to what he had to say. But, deaf to his pleadings, Suzette was hastily retiring into the cottage, when her further progress was arrested by his seizing her hand.

'Suzette!' he exclaimed, 'this coyness is cruel. Think you that I believe your affecta-

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tion of regard for that dilapidated piece of human nature, your husband? It is not only improbable, but it is actually impossible.'

'It is nevertheless true,' rejoined Suzette, calmly but firmly.

A smile of incredulity curled the lip of Philippe, as he replied,

'I suppose that I married for love also: united myself for love to a woman whose only recommendation was the louis d'ors that rested invitingly on the counter of the banque. Why, charming Suzette, you have more than enough of rustic simplicity.'

Philippe attempted to clasp her in his arms, but Suzette sprang from him with the speed of a frightened bird, and beckoning to her children, who were playing at some distance, they came in an instant at her bidding. She threw her arms around them, and looking earnestly in the face of Philippe, said firmly, 'Behold, sir, here are my protectors.'

'Would you destroy me?' said Philippe.

'Rather say I would *save* you,' replied Suzette.

'Save!' exclaimed Philippe. 'Save!—this is worse than mockery. You know not how deeply, dearly I love you. In my case preservation is destruction, dearest Suzette.'

'Dearest Suzette!' was immediately echoed by a female voice in a tone of mockery from a little clump of shrubs that grew close beside the spot where Suzette was standing, and re-echoed by the deep bass voice of the sergeant, who advanced from the cottage at the same moment that Madame Niquet swiftly emerged from the concealment of the shrubbery. The loud taunting laugh with which that lady greeted the momentarily subdued captain, spoke rather of women's passion than mirth, and the cold sneering politeness that the old sergeant evinced, as he thanked him for his very kind *attentions* and *intentions* towards his wife, showed him that he had got snared by some means, whether by design or accident he knew not. A dilemma was not new to Philippe, but he had not calculated at being so suddenly surprised, and therefore paused a while to consider in what manner it would be best to place his new assailants in the background. He soon found that if he trusted only to his wits for his escape, he must act warily, for Madame Niquet seemed determined to give a breadth of colouring to the picture that he had not anticipated. In one hand she held before his visual faculties a somewhat crumpled piece of paper, bearing the impress of his signature, while with the forefinger of the other she pointed to a passage which appeared to create anything but pleasant sensations in the mind of Philippe. Those black and white evidences of the fallibility of promises are generally productive of mischief, and Philippe determined for the future to set his face against all those modern improvements that tend to the furtherance of universal intellectuality. When a man has jeopardized his character frequently, he becomes less careful of concealing it, but still it is an awkward position to be placed in, when apologies seem to freeze upon the lips like the droppings from the eaves in a winter's frost, that coagulate before they can legally divorce themselves from the edge of the tiles. Boldness was the only resource left him; and as he did not think it necessary to consult truth on the occasion, or even to consider that circumstances must correspond to ensure the belief of his story, his exculpatory address was a confused mass of palpable improbabilities. He assured the sergeant that his attentions to Suzette were Platonic, perfectly innocent, and that they were simply intended to curb the vanity and check the troublesome advances of Madame Niquet, whose concealment he had observed, and was delighted to seize upon the opportunity which thus offered itself to convince her that, as a married man, he had a heart of adamant.

'A wonderful transformation,' exclaimed Madame Niquet, sneeringly, 'but too sudden to be credited. May I presume to ask Captain Survilliers whether his heart was so cold, cramped, and hardened, when he wrote to me as his dearest, sweetest, best beloved, angelic Adele Niquet?'

Philippe bit his lips with vexation, while his tormentor seemed to take almost a savage delight in making him writhe under her satire. The *exposé* before Suzette was what he most dreaded, but on turning round in the hope of conciliating Madame Niquet, he found himself *tête-à-tête* with his annoyer, a situation somewhat disagreeable, though he was, on the other hand, glad to be with her alone. The sergeant had led Suzette quietly away from the scene of action, and so deeply had Philippe been engaged with his own reflections, that her exit had been unperceived. It was like giving new life to Philippe to discover that he had now but one foe to contend with, and indulging such a flattering opinion of the female sex as to believe them capable of being fooled by men at their pleasure, he began to try the experiment upon the feelings of the lady, of whom he now stood in some degree of awe. With all his knowledge of human nature, he knew little of the arts of women. He had studied their susceptibility, love of sentiment, enthusiasm, and sympathy, with the romantic ideality of feeling, but he had yet to learn that they could give a strong contrast to that delicate softness and sensibility when the fineness of those feelings were

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outraged. It was in vain that he endeavoured to soothe the angry feelings of the disappointed coquette, who quitted his presence, like a sibyl of old, with a warning to beware of the future.

The scene which took place between Suzette and the sergeant in the interior of the cottage was a far more sentimental one than that which we have just described. She was weeping bitterly, her cheek resting against that of her eldest child, who stood in silent wonderment at this unusual display of sorrow, ever and anon mingling a tear of sympathy with those that fell from the eyes of Suzette. Neither she nor the sergeant seemed disposed for some minutes to dispel the haughty reserve that prevailed; he had no cause to chide, and she had no right to blame; therefore they were both placed in that very odd predicament in which man and wife sometimes stand, wishing to have a comfortable quarrel, yet not knowing how to begin it, for the simple want of being able to find the shadow of a reason for the indulgence of their laudable desires. At length the sergeant did venture, in a very subdued tone of voice, to ask his wife the cause of her present sorrow, and then resumed the interesting employment of see-sawing himself in a chair, accompanying each alternate motion with that melodious matrimonial melody that partakes of the mingled qualities of tone that is produced by the union of a yawn with a sigh. Suzette raised her eyes towards him with an expression that would have been irresistible to any man not wholly insensible to the pleading glances of a woman. She looked at him timidly, as though she feared that the inquiry he had made were to be the prelude to a torrent of reproaches; but no censure came, and the sergeant looked almost foolishly humble as he said, 'I believe, Suzette, I have been for some days making a most egregious ass of myself.'

'In what way, my dear Mercier?' asked Suzette.

'By my idle suspicions,' replied the sergeant.

'Are you jesting, Mercier, or is it really true that you indulged a thought, even for a moment, to my prejudice?'

'I have seen my errors and repent it,' rejoined the sergeant.

The deepening colour that rose to the hitherto pale cheeks of Suzette proved that she felt the force of the confession. Putting her child on one side, she advanced to her husband, and placing her hand, that was trembling with the conflicting emotions by which she was agitated, on his shoulder, she said,

'Is it possible that you could give credence even to an idea that militated against my proved affection for you? Have I sought for woman's bane—the honey of man's adulation? Have I ever left the quiet of our hearth for the fête and the frolic? Have I been the careless wife, the neglectful mother, that you could indulge suspicions which you ought to have spurned with scorn from your imagination? It was not just, Mercier, to condemn me unheard!'

The sergeant drew his breath laboriously; his sight was dimmed by something like a tear, and, as he pressed Suzette closely to his bosom, he exclaimed, 'Forgive me!' and sobbed like a child whose spirits have been subdued and almost broken by chidings.

Where affection exists, forgiveness is never refused; and, conscious of her own innocence in thought, word, and deed, Suzette scrupled not to give him the kiss of renewed love and friendship, and the past was banished like an unpleasant dream from her mind.

'Quarrel and kiss!' cried Madame Niquet, who, having sent Philippe again on his travels, entered at this moment of perfect reconciliation—'that is just what my dear departed husband and I used to do. All that, I am very ready to allow, is right in wedded life; but widows, with the crows'-feet, cousin Mercier, must quarrel without kissing, you know.'

'Which is much to their sorrow, cousin Niquet,' replied the sergeant.

'And pray why should widows be so very sorrowful?' inquired Madame Niquet, with an affectation of gravity.

'Not because they are widowed,' said the sergeant, 'but because they cannot find faith in man a second time. Suzette and I shall not be the worse for this little *brouillerie*, and you will, I hope, be better, since you have found out you were made the dupe of a lover *au tors et au travers*.'

'*Toujours constant, jamais fidele*, is the motto of all men,' replied Madame Niquet. 'Philippe shall be my dupe yet, or I have not the wit of a widow. But I shall want the assistance of you and Suzette for the accomplishment of my designs. They are but in outline as yet, and I have a desire to make them perfect specimens of art. You need not be jealous another time, cousin Mercier, for I will inform you, beforehand, that both you and your wife—let her blush if she will—must be my active agents. Why, you look frightened, sergeant! Well, well, that does not surprise me, for I think if Suzette had as many wrinkles in her face as there are pothooks and hangers in a boy's first copy-book, he would make strong love to her the very first opportunity that might offer.'

'Would he?' exclaimed the sergeant, starting up like a warrior who is summoned to

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battle by the beating of the drum—'would he?'

'Bah! you know he would, and I intend he should.'

'Are you mad, cousin Niquet?' cried the sergeant, stamping his wooden leg upon the brick floor, much to the detriment of the baked earth.

'No,' replied madame, 'but so it must be, to prevent your having a return of your old complaint;—a relapse, you know, is always, exceedingly dangerous. I have secured a helpmate for you in the person of his wife, who has as strong a desire to cure him of his roving propensities as I have to box his ears soundly for his conduct to me.'

'Leave me out of the plot, if you please,' said Suzette. 'It appears that my happiness has already been nearly wrecked in consequence of suspicions, which, I am ready to allow, circumstances contributed to strengthen.'

'To prove that I am not jealous,' interrupted the sergeant, 'for once in my life, I will readily sign and seal a bond, giving unto my wife full authority to act as a *femme sole*, to flirt, flatter, fidget, and frighten Captain Philippe Survilliers, to the utmost extent that my fair cousin with the crows' feet may consider advisable.'

'Personalities, sergeant, are like wrinkles, very unpleasant companions to a lady's private memorandums, cousin Mercier. But let the offence pass. To me it is but like the cobweb that tickles the nose as one passes through a shrubbery—we brush it away, and think of it no more. But, my dear Suzette, you positively must be a person in my projected drama, or it cant be brought out. I shall arrange the situations, you shall receive the applause, while my worthy cousin, who is cast to play the *rôle* of Cupid *pro. tem.*, shall not, in the end, have a leg to stand upon, not even a crow's-foot.'

Madame Niquet, whom private pique had made the warm advocate of public virtue, had entered into a league, offensive and defensive, with Madame Survilliers, who, having property over which her husband had no control, and in which he had no interest except such as his good behaviour might warrant him in expecting, was as anxious to reduce him to the standard of a reasonable being as any other woman placed under similar circumstances could possibly be. She had one unfortunate failing, and that was an inordinate degree of love for Philippe, whose follies she had sometimes striven to palliate, and whose faults, after a little lady-like pouting, she was always induced to forgive. The jealousy of Madame Niquet first made her acquainted with her husband's love for Suzette, and, after much consultation between the two ladies, it was resolved, that if it were possible to make Philippe suffer in the same way, some hopes might yet be retained of bringing him back to his home, a steady, willing-to-be-governed, married gentleman.

It was not long ere the plot which had been planned by Madame Niquet was put in execution. Madame Survilliers, who was one of the loving portion of creation, and perhaps more affectionate to the deceptive than she would have been towards the faithful possessor of her heart, was anxious to try any plan that was likely to restore the truant to her arms. Frequent consultations were privately held between her and the sergeant on the subject that bound her heart a captive to its pains. The probable effects of the scheme were discussed again and again by the parties most interested, and the lady commissioner, who was the prime mover of the conspiracy, was appointed the plenipotentiary to arrange, and, perchance, aggravate the matters in dispute between the contracting parties. O those dear, delightful opportunities of signal revenge upon the betrayers of the feelings! They are the very manna that falls in the wilderness of love, to feed the hungry spirits of disappointed damsels—the leaven that raises the passions from a state of torpidity. Memory sometimes runs riot, and, like a midnight wassailer, is lost in forgetfulness; but when love is in the question, it has a tenacity which nothing but death or destruction can sever. The poor trout, tortured by the angler, strives with all its powers to escape from the barbed hook—but in vain; and women, when once deeply, indelibly in love, cannot get the stain out of the heart by the application of all the acids that have ever been compounded by the skill of the chemist. Unwillingly, Suzette was, at length, persuaded to become a party in the attempt to rationalize a rake, who seemed not to be disposed to give up the empty dreamings of dissipated youth. Philippe had ever been a slave to folly, and, as his sworn tormentor said, 'might be led to play the fool at any moment by a woman's smile.'

The year had passed on from its springtide to its fall, before an opportunity offered to carry the grand measures which female ingenuity had devised—the moon, one autumn, not having been roused from her slumbers, or, like a lazy serving maiden, wishing to steal half an hour's more repose than Mistress Nature generally thought necessary to allow, had scarcely begun to draw back the cloud-curtains of her bed, when indistinctness so completely veiled the localities around the cottage, that the approach of a visitor could only be known by the echo of his footsteps, that Suzette was sitting alone in her cottage before the cheering embers of a wood fire;

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the sergeant, Madame Niquet, and all the other members of the family, being assisting at one of those village fêtes which are in France the general Sunday nights' attraction to all except the higher classes. Philippe was generally, on those occasions, one of the gayest of the group with which he condescended to mingle, and finding so fair an opportunity offer itself for another attempt upon the heart of Suzette, he stole away from the *guinguette*, and without waiting to attend to the customary forms of society, entered the cottage, and began again most impressively to plead his suit. Suzette, who was really alarmed, burst into tears, and entreated him to leave the house, if he did not intend to seal her domestic misery for ever. A smile of triumph passed over the features of Philippe, as he replied, 'Why, even should echo be a tell-tale, as the old gossips tell us she is, her voice would not be likely to reach the ears of my good old friend, who is engaged in admiring the ankles of the dancing girls, while you are left to indulge in the delightful amusement afforded by solitary reflection. Ah, Suzette! had you been mine, mine own adored, devotedly-attached love, how different had been your fate! pleasure would have gilded the passing hours,—happiness would have been in your grasp, and I should have been spared the misery of being hourly annoyed by the ostentatious display of an affection that is as cloying to my taste as sugar is to the palate of a person who detests sweets. Our present meeting calls back the bliss of former times—when we met in the gaiety of youth, with hearts unfettered by the chains that the customs of the world cast around us, when I believed that your affections were mine. Alas! how fatally have I been deceived!'

'I have not deceived you, sir,' replied Suzette; 'and if you think proper to let an illusion cheat your senses, I cannot see that I have any right to be blamed. Let me ask you whether I, as a wife and a mother, have not duties to perform to my children and husband, and to heaven, that you ought to feel shame at asking me to forego? You would not wish to see my children worse than motherless; scorned, taunted with their mother's guilt: to behold the man who once saved your life, drooping to an untimely grave through the treachery of the person for whom he risked his own life. No, no, Philippe, I cannot, even now, believe this of you.'

'Believe that I love you, pretty pleader,' said Philippe, 'and leave moralizing to that sober, steady person, your wedded encumbrance.'

It was one of the most critical moments in the life of Suzette. Past times played like a dream over her memory, and Philippe fancied that his power over her affections was secure, when a hurried knocking at the outer door awakened him from the mental delusion in which he was indulging, and induced him to seek concealment in the adjoining room. He had scarcely time to make his escape before Madame Niquet entered. She was apparently almost choked with convulsive sobbings; and as she contrived to conceal one side of her face with her handkerchief, Philippe, who was peeping through the half-opened door, did not observe the signs she made to Suzette before she began to explain the cause of her agitation.

'Suzette, my dear Suzette,' cried Madame Niquet, with an emphasis that was spitefully accurate, 'it is as we feared; that horrible Madame Survilliers, that pattern of propriety, has succeeded in her attempts to wean the affections of the sergeant from you. I could not have believed it, had I not been an eye-witness. I watched them: my poor deceived Suzette, and—I am sure it would kill you if I were to tell you all. Good heavens, child, how pale you look!—I will get you a glass of water before I tell you one word more;' and she hastened to the apartment where Philippe had sought concealment. It was impossible to effect an escape. Madame Niquet shrieked in affected affright, and the hydra-hearted lover was compelled to come forth to listen to a tale anything but pleasant to his self-love, and Madame Niquet took especial care to make the worst of a bad business, and soon succeeded in rendering Philippe as completely miserable as any married man, whose wife has her *own* property in her *own* hands, can possibly be made, when he has something like a suspicion that she may take a fancy to leave *his* purse empty. The condolence offered by Madame Niquet was as jesuitical as his own proceedings, and Suzette, who had buried her face in an embroidered *tablier*, appeared to be too much agitated to give any opinion upon the widow's recapitulation of passing events. Many men are deceived with their eyes open, and, in this instance, Philippe was a martyr to his belief. Instigated by Madame Niquet, he accompanied her and Suzette to the place where he was assured his wife was planning his ruin with Sergeant Mercier. The old-established axiom that the causers of pain suffer it with less fortitude than those who strive to ameliorate the sorrows of their fellow-creatures, was proved to be true in the case of Philippe Survilliers. His conscience rose up in judgment against him, and, for once in his life, he really felt surprised that any person living had the power to render him uncomfortable. He was disquieted in his mind; vague thoughts flitted across his imagination, that seemed to

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offer corroborative evidence of the truth of the story he had heard, and amongst the chaotic mass of circumstances that bewildered him, he thought he could discover something like a foundation for the intelligence that made him at the moment miserable.

Madame Niquet, after having extorted from him a promise of secresy and silence, pioneered him to his own chateau, and placed him in a position where all that passed between the sergeant and his wife could be distinctly seen and heard. The sergeant was seated on a couch beside Madame Survilliers, whose hand rested carelessly upon his shoulders, while she appeared to be looking in his face with a degree of interest that might have roused the jealousy of any moderately attached person. Philippe's eyes were employed in watching the apparently affectionate pair, and his ears had full occupation in listening to the smoothly-turned sentences that were addressed by the lady to the sergeant. That *his* wife could be false had never entered most distantly into the ideas of Philippe, and the desperate wound that was thus given by the discovery to his self-esteem was increased by Madame's expressing almost the same thoughts, words, and wishes that he had been accustomed to give utterance to in his interviews with Suzette. It was with difficulty that Madame Niquet could, at times, keep him in his concealment; and it must be acknowledged that she charitably endeavoured to increase his agitation by every little device she could summon to her aid. Suzette, meanwhile, had withdrawn to a distant part of the salon, and whether the convulsive movements that were at times discernible were caused by her sobs or laughter, it would have taken a wiser person than Philippe to decide. Madame Survilliers was eloquent in her eulogiums on the manly graces of the sergeant, and disparaged even the few good qualities that her husband possessed as effectively as his most bitter enemy could have desired.

'Did you fancy, my dear sergeant,' said the lady, 'that I married him for love? The thought is too ridiculous. It was with me a mere *marriage de convenance*. He wanted money, and, to say truth, my reputation being somewhat soiled, I thought it best to repair it by taking a husband.'

'A wedded encumbrance, my dearest,' rejoined the sergeant, 'but it was an excusable sacrifice on your part. It is ridiculous to think how the captain fancies, while he is eyeing the dancing girls, and playing with their ringlets, as the breeze brushes them towards his cheek, that his wife is left to enjoy her own solitary reflections.'

'With you for a companion, *mon brave!*' responded madame.

'Though echo is a tell-tale, mine own adored, devotedly-attached love,' continued the sergeant, 'she will not be likely to whisper of our endearments in his ear. I know you never loved him: indeed, such a circumstance would have been as impossible as that I could have forgotten the bliss of former times.'

'His very professions of affection are as cloying to my taste, as sugar is to the palate of one who detests sweets,' said madame; 'and being aware that some day a discovery would most likely take place, I contrived to keep my money in my own power; now I shall at once provide for the children;—the bond is prepared, and ready for my signature, and that once done, my brave sergeant, we will fly, and leave Philippe to moralize on the faithfulness of his wife, if you still think you really love me.'

'Pretty pleader,' said the sergeant, bending over her hand in an attitude that roused the wrath of Philippe to fever heat.

'Fly! whither, madam?' cried Captain Survilliers furiously, as he rushed into the apartment, despite the efforts of Madame Niquet to detain him longer to listen to the punishment that had been prepared for him, and he raved against women until his vocabulary of invectives appeared to be quite exhausted. Suzette and Madame Niquet filled up the background of the picture; and each took occasion to remind him of the professed affection for themselves.

'Find consolation in my smiles,' said Madame Niquet; 'sunbeams are always most lovely after a shower; and you have so frequently praised the sunniness of my eyes, you know, my own dear captain.'

'Remember your promises to me,' echoed Suzette.

'Peace, devils!' exclaimed Philippe writhing under the agony of rage, mortification, and disappointment, 'man's curse is woman!'

'Why, captain!' shrieked Madame Niquet, at the very top of her voice, 'two hours ago Suzette was an angel; and I was *once* your angel also. Why, you used to kneel and pray to me. Come, kneel down, and let me hear you say your prayers again!'

Madame Survilliers began to feel something like pity for her half-distracted helpmate, and with calmness assured him that, like himself, she found it impossible to account for the bestowal of her affections. She regretted that it should be the cause of pain to him; but, after the present rather unpleasant discovery, she thought it would be better that he should be put in possesion of the whole truth.

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'Yes,' interrupted the sergeant, 'you know, captain, that *love* is as invincible as the grand army; therefore, as things are *as* they are, bear your fate with philosophy, as I have done.'

'And,' said Madame Niquet, 'instead of reviling and upbraiding two poor heart-broken women, whose love for you is the cause of their anguish, soothe their sorrows; for their tears, while they are clinging round you, give evidence that you will not be left disconsolate.'

Philippe grew furious: his wife kept provokingly calm, and entreated him to believe that nothing but her making a full confession of all her *past* and *present* follies, could convince him that she was acting with the most perfect propriety, both towards him and *the children*, by adopting the course of conduct she was now pursuing.

'Children!' exclaimed Philippe, with a look of horror.

'Let me confess all without interruption,' continued Madame Survilliers; 'permit me to call in my two loves, and have the happiness of hearing them call me mother. Behold them,' she said, as two fine girls entered at her bidding, and around whose necks she fondly folded her arms, while Philippe was with difficulty prevented from laying violent hands upon these unexpected additions to his family circle, by the united exertions of Suzette and Madame Niquet, while his wife defied his power, and dared him to execute any one of the various threats which he held out to reduce her again to obedience.

The scene now began to assume a new character. Philippe sank on a couch, half exhausted from passion and mortified pride; while Madame Survilliers acted her *rôle* in the drama with what is called a startling effect; so much so, that Philippe began to evince symptoms of womanish weakness, which his unrelenting helpmate seemed to take pleasure in exciting, and Madame Niquet spitefully contrived to add fuel to the flame, whenever an opportunity offered.

'They are two sweet little darlings, captain,' said Madam Niquet. 'Do but look at them, and fancy them your own. You know you have had many odd fancies, captain, that have proved quite as delusive. Why, you ought to show something like a fatherly feeling towards the little ones.'

'The captain is considering which of the twain is to be his favourite,' said the sergeant; 'or probably debating in his mind whether his present position between the fire of two rivals will be long tenable.'

Philippe began to be more vehement than polite in his expressions, often giving vent to ebullitions of rage that would have been startling to those around him, had they not been well assured that he was powerless. Madame Survilliers began to find that it was almost time to bring this scene to a close. The tell-tale dew that dimmed her eye, told her that she could not much longer conceal the feelings of her heart; and after a struggle to assume a degree of calmness, she addressed her husband. 'Philippe,' she said, 'we understand each other better than we have hitherto done. My claims upon your affection were "the louis d'ors that rested so invitingly on the counter of the Banque;" therefore, as our ideas so perfectly assimilate, we shall not quarrel on that subject. Neither need we dispute respecting my disposing of those said louis d'ors, which are of right my own, as it may best please me; for you would have liberally given them to the children of Suzette. You see, Philippe, that I know all; you have been betrayed. One parting favour, however, I must ask, and I will not hear a refusal;—it is that you will witness the bond by which I transfer my wealth to these dear children. Sanctioned by your name, my indiscretion will pass for virtue: and virtue, like other articles of commerce, is always marketable.'

'I can die, madame,' said Philippe, 'but I cannot, will not, sign my own disgrace.'

'Pshaw!' returned madame, 'you have not been always so particular, as your promises to the two ladies who are now preferring their claims give evidence. I have borne your irregularities and neglect patiently and silently; at the confession of my own faults you grow violent. Are not my rights equal to yours, or was woman created to suffer, not to speak; to be wronged yet not permitted to revenge?—It appears that we both deceived ourselves when we married, and it is only at the hour of separating that each makes a full discovery of the follies of the other. I have long known that I possessed the *smallest* share of your heart, and that trifle I now render back; it may at some future time be useful to yourself. Will you give your attestation to my signature to this bond?'

'Never!'

'Then I thus perform my promise and *yours;*' and Madame Survilliers took a pen, and deliberately signed her name to the deed before her. Philippe was almost phrenzied with rage and rushing forward he seized the paper, yet wet with the newly-written name, and was about to tear it into atoms when his hand was arrested by Suzette, who thought the poor man had been sufficiently punished by his sworn tormentors, and the action was followed by a laugh of bitter irony that plainly proved to Philippe he had been the subject of some mystification. The group gathered around the astonished Philippe, who

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stood holding the scrawl in his hand, and looking marvellously like a person placed within a magic circle.

'Stratagems are fair, captain,' said the sergeant, 'and you find ours has been a harmless one. The next time you trouble yourself about other men's wives, bear the scene you have just seen acted in remembrance, and learn that, however inferior they may be in station, honour and virtue are as dearly prized by them as if they were your superiors. Had I not the most perfect confidence in the truth of my little Suzette, your conduct would have rendered our married life anything but happy. Your disappearance from the dance was not unobserved, your footsteps were closely followed by my fair cousin, who, some little time ago, believed that love and youth were of the class of evergreens, and although the exposure you have undergone may have been somewhat severe, you must acknowledge you richly deserved it. I beg to return him, madame, to your arms, to reclaim my two children, who were only lent for the evening, and, with your permission, keep Suzette to cheer my own domestic hearth free from the encumbrances of persevering married rakes.'

'And I,' said Madame Niquet, curtseying formally, 'take this opportunity of returning to Captain Survilliers the promises he voluntarily made me. As the law does not allow him two wives at a time, my case is hopeless, and his letters are useless; therefore, my dear faithless lover, put them into your pocket, or in the fire, as may best please you, and never trust a widow again, especially if you are at the same time making love to her cousin's wife.'

'Without the consent of her husband,' interrupted the sergeant.

'And without the consent of the wife also,' said Madame Niquet.

'My permission was never asked,' said Madame Survilliers, 'and it might not have been granted if it had been, for few wives are inclined to give up their *purchases*.'

'Although they sometimes make bad bargains,' rejoined Madame Niquet.

'I have been a party in this little plot against you, though not a very active one,' said Suzette; 'but I have always indulged the idea that your errors arose rather from thoughtlessness than from worse motives. The most aggrieved parties in this case are the *wives*, and if they are inclined to look over what has passed, you may forgive the temporary punishment that they have inflicted upon you.'

Philippe looked as foolish as any man caught in his own snare could possibly do. Suzette led him up to Madame Survilliers, who held out her hand, and with a smile, said, 'Am I to understand that my husband confesses himself conquered by this stratagem of his wife, who loves him as much as he loves the louis d'ors?'

'No more on that subject,' said Philippe; 'I own I have deserved all that I have met with.'

'And how much more?' asked Madame Niquet archly.

'As much as your charity can bestow upon me,' replied Philippe.

'My charity is on a very limited scale with respect to men in general,' said Madame Niquet; 'but kiss and be friends, as the old saying goes, and endeavour to copy the happiness that now crowns, and I trust ever will do, the wedded life of the wooden-legged sergeant.'

Philippe took the hand of his wife: Madame Niquet asserted that a tear fell upon it: and Madame Survilliers had, from that time to the present, no fault to find with her husband. We would therefore advise all wives similarly situated, to call in henceforward a *widow* to arrange their domestic disputes.

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